

Dictionaries and the teaching and learning of French:
a survey of teacher and student attitudes.

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts in French
in the
University of Canterbury
by
Sally H. Hunter

University of Canterbury

1985

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	ABSTRACT	1
1	INTRODUCTION	2
2	TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF STUDENT DICTIONARY USE .	24
3	STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR DICTIONARY USE	45
4	STUDENT DICTIONARY USE FOR SPECIFIC TASKS . .	74
5	CONCLUSION: THE ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL ROLE OF THE DICTIONARY IN THE LANGUAGE TEACHING/ LEARNING PROCESS	101
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	110
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	111
	APPENDICES	113

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES	PAGE
1 Dictionaries recommended for purchase: Stage I	26
2 Dictionaries recommended for purchase: Stage II	28
3a-e Dictionaries used (owned and borrowed)	47-9
4 Dictionary use: monolingual and bilingual	
dictionaries	50
5 Mean number of dictionaries used	51
6 Most frequent consultation of any dictionary .	53
7 Students' favourite dictionary	54
8a-e Purpose and frequency of dictionary	
consultation	55-7
9a-e Purpose of consultation and type of dictionary	
consulted	60-2
10 Dictionary usually consulted for comprehension	63
11 Dictionary usually consulted for production .	65
12 For what purpose do students mainly use the	
dictionary?	67
13 Dictionary reference skills	67
14 Summary table. Dictionary use: all university	
students	69
1 Summary table. Dictionary use - all univer-	
sity students	71
1 Success of initial dictionary consultation for	
comprehension	77
1 Success of bilingual dictionary consultation	
for production	80
1 Success of monolingual dictionary consultation	
for production	81

D1	Dictionaries owned: reasons for purchase . . .	125
D2	Dictionaries owned: when purchased	125
D3	Dictionary consultation frequency	126
D4	The students' 'favourite' dictionaries	127

FIGURES

1	Extracts from dictionary introductions	12
2	French text for comprehension assignment . . .	75
3	Text: French to English translation	85
4	Dictionary articles	87
5	Text: English to French translation and dictionary articles	94

LIST OF APPENDICES

	PAGE
Appendix A: Teacher and student questionnaire . . .	113-119
Appendix B: Prices of some dictionaries recommended for student purchase	120
Appendix C: Dictionaries used by French teachers .	121
Appendix D: Dictionaries used by French students .	122-4
Table D1 Dictionaries owned: reasons for purchase	125
Table D2 Dictionaries owned: when purchased	125
Table D3 Dictionary consultation frequency	126
Table D4 The students' 'favourite' dictionaries	127
Appendix E: Recorded protocols	128-139

ABSTRACT

This study is a description of the dictionary use of one relatively homogeneous group of consultants: senior secondary school and university students learning French as a foreign language in New Zealand. The description has three components: (1) French teachers completed a questionnaire on their preferences for dictionaries for their students, their views on the relative merits of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, the errors in their students' work which they attribute to dictionary use, the instruction they give on dictionary use, etc. (2) French students completed a questionnaire in which they gave a generalised description of their dictionary use, and reported on their dictionary preferences and dictionary reference skills, etc. (3) Two groups of students described their dictionary use in relation to specific tasks involving the comprehension and production of French.

The results show that although few teachers produced lexicographical arguments for favouring bilingual or monolingual dictionaries or for recommending particular dictionaries, their influence on their students' dictionary use was significant. Students tended to buy the dictionary recommended and used those they owned more than those they could borrow. However, because students favoured bilingual dictionaries, the recommendation of a monolingual dictionary only, although heeded, also meant that the choice of a bilingual dictionary was left to the students who often chose a cheaper, smaller dictionary. On the other hand, students whose teachers recommended only bilingual dictionaries rarely used monolingual dictionaries.

The students showed a strong preference for bilingual dictionaries for both the comprehension and production of French. Although they reported that their dictionary consultation was usually 'successful' and that they possessed adequate reference skills, this was not entirely supported by either the description of dictionary use for specific tasks ((3) above) or by the remarks of teachers concerning errors due to dictionary use (which were generally attributed to student 'carelessness'). Certainly, there was evidence that some students treated dictionaries as mere word-lists and failed to appreciate the wealth of material available in the better dictionaries.

It is suggested that the remedy to this situation may lie with teachers. They could take more care in their recommendations of dictionaries for their students, basing their choice on lexicographical principles aimed at matching the reference needs and level of language acquisition of their students with the dictionary(ies) most able to fulfil these needs. They could encourage their students to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of their dictionaries, be they bilingual or monolingual.

Overall, this study supports the findings of previous research on dictionary use among advanced foreign language learners in that it confirms the 'quantity' of dictionary use but questions its 'quality'.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The use of dictionaries by foreign language learners is widespread and accepted almost without question. Perhaps because of this there have been few studies of it. The present work attempts to describe dictionary use among one relatively homogeneous group of consultants: senior secondary school and university students learning French as a foreign language in New Zealand. Advanced foreign language learners, as these students may be described, have been the subject of previous research which has confirmed the quantity of dictionary use among them but raised doubts about its quality.

The publishers of dictionaries claim to be able to satisfy the demands of a diversity of potential users: for monolingual dictionaries, of native speakers and foreign language learners; for bilingual dictionaries, of native speakers and foreign language learners of both of the relevant languages. Such diverse groups of dictionary users may be categorised according to a number of criteria, not the least of which is their level of proficiency in the language or languages concerned. More precisely, they may be classified (as Cowie¹ has suggested) according to first, their reference needs i.e. their need for access to lexical information of various types, for various purposes, and second, their reference skills i.e. their ability to retrieve this lexical information from the dictionary (there is an additional factor which is the ability of the dictionary consultant to use the information retrieved).

The reference needs of foreign language learners are

-
1. Cowie, A.P., 'English dictionaries for the foreign language learner'. Paper presented at the Exeter Summer School on Lexicography, 1980 and cited in Béjoint, H., see reference 12.

related to their level of language acquisition and to the tasks they are called upon to perform as part of the teaching/learning process. The type of information sought in dictionaries depends, then, on the use to which the language is being put, but can, in general terms, be seen to relate to one or other of the two major facets of language use, be it native or foreign language i.e. comprehension and production. Is there, in fact, a difference between the needs of native speakers and foreign language learners vis-à-vis the dictionary? Those who compile dictionaries for the latter group believe there is. So that, while both native speakers and foreign language learners may use the dictionary for help in the comprehension of unknown words and phrases, the foreign language learner is far more likely to consult his dictionary for help in using a word or phrase i.e. for production. Galisson², however, in his study of the use of dictionaries among 'advanced' foreign language students found that they consulted dictionaries for very similar (and 'banal') purposes in both the foreign language and their native language, which, he concluded, was due to their lack of sophistication regarding foreign language dictionaries.

The reference needs of a particular group of language learners are probably more predictable and more capable of generalisation than are the reference skills which each dictionary user will bring into play when consulting a dictionary. This may be because dictionary consultation is left more to chance since, as Last³ has pointed out, dictionary reference skills are "frequently undertaught and seriously undeveloped even at the undergraduate stage." Thus language learners may be affected detrimentally by weaknesses in skills which although not directly related to language acquisition, can restrict their ability to derive the best profit from language learning.

-
2. Galisson, R., 'Image et usage du dictionnaire chez des étudiants (en langue) de niveau avancé', Etudes de linguistique appliquée, 49, 5-88, 1983.
 3. Last, R., Language teaching and the microcomputer, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1984, p.84.

On the one hand, then, there are dictionary users with certain reference needs for lexical information and with particular reference skills, and, on the other hand, there are dictionaries, which are by definition repositories of lexical information. Whether or not dictionary consultation will prove 'successful' will depend on:

- a) the consultant's reference needs for information related to comprehension or production of the foreign language;
- b) the consultant's reference skills which include level of language acquisition (particularly in the case of monolingual dictionaries), knowledge of grammar, of phonetic symbols, of dictionary conventions, etc.;
- c) the nature of the dictionary itself: its size, its recency, whether it is monolingual or bilingual, its treatment of syntactical information, its provision of examples of usage, etc.

The informants on dictionary use.

The students who are the subjects of the present study are learners of French as a foreign language in New Zealand secondary schools (seventh formers, fifth year of study of French) and universities (first to fourth year students, sixth to ninth years, respectively, of French study). Generally speaking these students will have had little contact with the French language in a French language speaking environment, and, despite the emphasis on communicative competence which is a feature of much early language teaching in secondary schools, all these students can be seen to share certain basic tasks in language learning. On the one hand, they will have to read French, listen to it and translate it into English i.e. they will have to comprehend French. On the other hand, they will have to write in French, speak it and translate into it from English i.e. they will have to produce French. The relative importance of these various tasks will depend, among other things, on the level of teaching, the emphasis of the course, the requirements of examinations, and the personal predilections of the teacher. For literature and culture courses or

components of courses, for example, there will be an emphasis on the comprehension through reading of written French texts, while in language courses the production of French will range from free composition to the relative confines of prose and translation. Whatever the emphasis of courses, and leaving to one side the question of oral production and aural comprehension, it can be seen that the dictionary has an important contributory, albeit passive, role to play in the language learning process.

Just as teachers determine to a large extent the content and emphasis of their courses, particularly at university level, so too they can have a major influence on students' choice of, attitudes towards and use of dictionaries. Their views too on the use of dictionaries are relevant to this study of dictionary use.

Reference needs and dictionaries.

The reference needs of the present foreign language learners are related, obviously, to their level of French language acquisition and to the tasks they need to perform. The success of dictionary consultation will depend on the type of dictionary consulted, the nature of the lexical information sought, and on the desired degree of precision. The consultation of a dictionary for the meaning of a French word met in the course of reading seems more likely to be 'successful' than is the translation into French of some idea that the student has in mind in English. Without at this stage considering the type of knowledge that the dictionary consultant must possess to profit from dictionary consultation for production and comprehension, it is still clear that the former requires the student to move from a known language (the native one) to an unknown one, while the latter requires the student to move from an unknown to a known language. That is, the student's knowledge of his own language will often make up for the lack of precision he finds in the dictionary when he consults it for the purpose of comprehension.

The level of French language acquisition and the nature of the tasks to be performed have implications not only for the likelihood of 'successful' dictionary consultation, but

more fundamentally for the type of dictionary most conducive to success. Depending on the level of language acquisition of the student there may be a point below which monolingual dictionaries destined for native speakers are not useful. This is not to imply that at such a level bilingual dictionaries are the only possibility; rather that monolingual dictionaries created especially for foreign language learners, having as they do a limited definitional vocabulary, may be advisable. The whole question of bilingual vis-à-vis monolingual dictionaries is debatable. A French professor⁴ describes the complaints of his fellow-teachers regarding their students' use of bilingual dictionaries in the following terms: "Qui n'a entendu les professeurs de langue se plaindre des dictionnaires bilingues et surtout de l'usage qu'en font les élèves et les étudiants? Qui ne sait qu'en bonne doctrine pédagogique, cet engin nocif est proscrit, ou en tout cas son usage repoussé le plus loin possible dans le cours des études? N'est-il pas en effet nuisible à cette lente imprégnation, ce contact direct avec la langue étrangère qui garantissent seuls la compréhension authentique?" (before going on to favourably review and recommend a bilingual dictionary!). The same argument can be expressed in another way: "Just as the art lover cannot expect to appreciate abstract painting if he holds too fixedly to an aesthetic ideal based on landscapes, so the language learner must be willing to shed, at least temporarily, his cultural and linguistic preconceptions and prejudices and accept new ones. Here the monolingual dictionary is an indispensable aid."⁵ The idea implicit in these arguments is that sooner or later the learner must cease to cling to his own language.

Whether it is monolingual or bilingual what qualities can reasonably be expected in a dictionary which claims to address the needs of foreign language learners of French? First, it will show an awareness of the fact that foreign

4. Béjoint, H., 'Un nouveau dictionnaire bilingue', Les langues modernes, ?, no.5, 475, 1978.

5. Jones, E.D., French dictionaries - an assessment, Canterbury Monographs for Teachers of French, No.5, Seventh Series, p.6, 1981.

language learners may use their dictionaries as much for production as for comprehension.⁶ The minimum requirements would appear to be the following; the dictionary will

- a) present an appropriate proportion of the French lexis;
- b) give the pronunciation of each head-word and, where necessary, sub-entry in the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet;
- c) give as clearly and completely as possible the definitions of head-words and their derivatives, or in the case of bilingual dictionaries, their equivalents;
- d) give examples of phrases, sentences and expressions which not only clarify the various meanings of a word or its possible equivalents, but indicate its common usages;
- e) make clear the distinction between free and fixed locutions;
- f) give as much information as possible to help the user avoid making mistakes of usage. Such mistakes may be linguistic (morphological or syntactic) or socio-linguistic (register).

Comprehension of (written) French and dictionary use.

As far as dictionary consultation is concerned the major part of comprehension relates to the reading of French texts. To a lesser extent students may be asked to undertake exercises involving the comprehension of written texts or translations from French into English. Where these are done in the students' own time dictionaries will no doubt be consulted (as will be shown in Chapter 4).

Comprehension of French requires that the student be able to deduce the meaning of a given word or phrase in its context. Although contextual guessing is a skill used to a greater or lesser extent by all language learners there will be many occasions when students will consult a dictionary to determine the meaning of a word or phrase in a given context.

6. Ilson, R., 'Etymological information: can it help our students?', ELT Journal, 37, p.76, 1983.

Despite the commonality of much lexical information in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries there is one major feature which distinguishes them: the monolingual dictionary defines words, the bilingual dictionary gives their equivalents in the target language. The student who seeks the meaning of a given French word in context may therefore consult a monolingual dictionary where the word will be defined or a bilingual dictionary where its equivalent in English will be given from which its meaning may be deduced (this is leaving aside the problem of words having more than one meaning).

As far as any discussion of the pros and cons of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries for comprehension is concerned it is important to note, as mentioned above, that these two types of dictionaries have far more features in common than features which distinguish them and it is also true that there is probably a greater difference in quality between the available bilingual dictionaries than between monolingual and the better bilingual dictionaries. Students may still prefer for ease of consultation, a not negligible factor, their pocket bilingual than the best conceived monolingual dictionary. And, unless great precision is demanded (and of course provided the unknown word appears in the dictionary) this may be the most efficient form of consultation. The monolingual dictionary provides definitions for its head-words and gives examples to illustrate their usages. Whether students use definitions or examples or both to distinguish meaning it is clear that a certain level of language acquisition is necessary to understand the definitions of monolingual dictionaries (particularly, and this is not a problem specific to French monolingual dictionaries, because definitions are couched in the lexicographer's own particular terms). This is the reason why bilingual dictionaries have been commonly recommended for students with a limited knowledge of the foreign language, although there are, as has been previously mentioned, monolingual French dictionaries available which are aimed specifically at foreign language learners.

Although dictionary use for comprehension may seem a relatively straightforward operation, at least compared with that for production, it is not. However unitary the process

may appear to the experienced dictionary user there are a number of steps involved in successful dictionary consultation for comprehension purposes. The strategy involved may follow the path described below (according to Scholfield⁷ but adapted here from his example of the use of English dictionaries, to the use of monolingual French dictionaries or the French-English part of bilingual dictionaries).

The dictionary consultant must:

- a) locate the word or words causing comprehension difficulties; this may involve more than one attempt at the dictionary since what the user thinks is only a single word causing the problem may be a phrase.
 - b) derive the canonical form of the word e.g. if it is a verb (or verb form used adjectively) the infinitive is required (dictionaries vary in whether they provide entries for irregular forms of verbs, irregular feminine forms of adjectives, etc.):
 - c) search for the canonical form of the word in the alphabetical list.
 - d) if the word is not found in the nomenclature then
 - (i) examine the word again to see if it is part of set phrase, idiom, or a compound word; if possible look up each possible element;
 - (ii) if word has a suffix or prefix look under entry for stem;
 - (iii) consider the possibility that the word is a variant spelling and scan nearby entries.
 - e) if there are homonymic entries or polysemic senses reduce them by a process of elimination; at the simplest level this may involve knowing that the word is an adjective rather than a noun, that is for this step any or all of the following may be needed; grammatical class of word, its syntactic environment, its collocation properties, its register.
- If none of these proves helpful then the definition itself, in the case of a monolingual dictionary, may need to be used, put back into context and tested.

7. Scholfield, P., 'Using the English Dictionary for Comprehension', TESOL Quarterly, 16(2), 185-194, 1982.

In fact even when the alternatives have been reduced to one it still may not be the correct meaning.

- f) understand the meaning and integrate it back into context; this may involve looking up words in the definition itself (monolingual dictionaries), adjusting for collocation, part of speech, tense, breadth of meaning, etc.
- g) if none of the given meanings fits, attempt to deduce one from the senses given - if more than one fits, seek further contextual clues to distinguish the possibilities.

This schema for dictionary consultation for comprehension is not, according to Scholfield, simply a matter of following one step after another. Rather it may require constant backtracking and hypothesis testing. In particular, in deducing the required meaning, it is obvious that the dictionary user has to make a positive contribution in order for the consultation to be successful. Evidently the quality of the dictionary is also vital: steps c), d) and e) above depend largely on the practice adopted by a dictionary. Familiarity with this practice would obviously be helpful. It is clear that the reference skills of the dictionary user can be critical to successful dictionary consultation for comprehension.

Comprehension may be aided by the use of either monolingual or bilingual dictionaries provided the word or expression appears as an entry i.e. the size of the dictionary may be all important. With the production of French the difficulties with dictionary use increase.

Production of (written) French and dictionary use.

Language tasks which involve the production of French range from prose to free composition. The nature of the target language in production (French) is what distinguishes it from comprehension where the target language is the consultant's native language. All sorts of linguistic assumptions can be made by dictionary consultants in their native language and dictionary compilers consciously or unconsciously assume these. This is not true for foreign learners of a language. For them nothing goes without saying

and it may be the most simple and frequently used words which cause the most problems.

What demands, then, does the production of French make on a dictionary to be used by foreign language learners? It will need to meet certain minimal requirements as has been explained on p.7. First, the user will require the word(s) corresponding to a given meaning. A bilingual dictionary may be consulted (initially) if the user is beginning with an English word, or a monolingual dictionary if a word is 'known' in French in which case synonyms may be sought. Second, whether the user consults a bilingual or a monolingual dictionary clear distinction of different semantic fields for equivalents or synonyms is essential (in English in the case of a bilingual dictionary). Third, when the appropriate word is located, the user will need clear information on its spelling (feminine, plural forms if irregular), gender, verb conjugation class where appropriate, and its syntactic environment (direct or indirect object, verb followed by which preposition, subjunctive or indicative in subordinate clause, etc). Fourth, examples of common usages of the word are essential; in fact dictionary users may adapt these and incorporate them into their writing. Fifth, idiomatic expressions (and their clear labelling as such) are helpful. Finally, the question of register is critical. These qualities in a dictionary, which are not just desirable, but essential for the student wanting to use his dictionary for production, are present to variable degrees in most available dictionaries (there are apparently still some small bilingual dictionaries which do not even indicate different fields of meaning but simply list equivalents without any qualification).

Reference skills and dictionary use.

To use any dictionary profitably (and efficiently) the consultant must possess a certain number of reference skills. Dictionary compilers make a certain number of assumptions; first, they assume that the dictionary consultant possesses basic grammatical knowledge, and, particularly in the case of monolingual dictionaries destined for native speakers, they also make many assumptions about the syntactic pro-

Figure 1

Extracts from dictionary introductions

	<p>appareil [apaxa] nm (a) (pompe) pump. d'~ diner, habit, discours cérémonial; V grand. (b) (Littérat) ~ critique critical apparatus.</p> <p>appareil [apaxa] 1 nm (a) (machine, instrument) (gén) piece of apparatus, device, (électrique, ménager) appliance; (Rad, TV, poste) set. (Phot) camera, (téléphone) telephone. qui est à l'~? who's speaking?; Paul à l'~ Paul speaking.</p> <p>(b) (Aviat) (aéronef) aircraft.</p> <p>(c) (Med) (dentier) brace; (pour fracture) splint.</p> <p>(d) (Anat) (appareil digestif, système digestif) urogénital digestive urogenital system ou apparatus; ~ phonateur vocal apparatus ou organ (pl).</p> <p>(e) (structure administrative) machinery. l'~ policier the police machinery. l'~ du parti the party apparatus ou machinery. l'~ des lois the machinery of the law.</p> <p>(f) (Littérat) (déhors fastueux) air of pomp, (cérémonie fastueuse) ceremony. l'~ magnifique de la royauté the trappings ou splendor of royalty, V simple.</p> <p>(g) (Archit) (agencement des pierres) bond.</p> <p>2 appareil critique critical apparatus, appareil de levage lifting appliance, appareil orthopédique orthopaedic appliance, appareil-photo nm, pl appareils-photos, appareil photographique camera, appareil à sous (distributeur) slot machine, (craie) fruit machine, one-armed bandit.</p> <p>appareillage [apaxa] nm (a) (Naut) (départ) casting off, getting under way, (munir) (vues) preparations for casting off ou getting under way. (b) (équipement) equipment.</p> <p>appareiller [apaxa] (1) vt (Naut) to cast off, get under way. 2 vt (a) (Naut) to rig, fit out. (b) (Archit) to fit (pièce) to drill. (c) (coupler) to pair; (assortir) to match up; (accoupler) to mate (avec) with.</p> <p>apparement [apaxa] adv apparently.</p> <p>apparence [apaxa] nf (a) (aspect) (maison, personne) appearance, aspect. ce bâtiment a l'air belle ~ it's a fine looking building. Il a une ~ négligée he is shabby-looking, he has a slovenly look about him.</p> <p>(b) (apparence) (sourire) sous cette ~ souriante under that smiling exterior, sous l'~ de la générosité under this outward show of apparent display of generosity, ce n'est qu'une fausse ~ it's a mere façade, il ne faut pas prendre les ~ pour la réalité one mustn't mistake appearances for reality, se fier aux apparences ~s to trust keep up appearances.</p> <p>(c) (semblance, vestige) semblance. Il n'a plus une ~ de respect pour he no longer has a semblance of respect for.</p> <p>(d) (Photo) appearance.</p> <p>(e) (floc) malgré l'~ ou les ~ in spite of appearances, contre toute ~ against all expectations, selon toute ~ in all probability, en ~ apparently, seemingly, on the face of it, des propos en ~ contradictory, il a des paroles apparently so contradictory harmless, ce n'est qu'en ~ qu'il est heureux it's only on the surface ou outwardly that he's happy.</p> <p>apparent, e [apaxa, ut] adj (a) (visible) apprehension, gêne obvious, noticeable, ruse obvious de façon ~e visibly, conspicuously, sans raison cause ~e without apparent ou obvious reason cause, plafond avec poutres ~es ceiling with visible beams ou beams showing, coutures ~es topstitched seams.</p> <p>(b) (superficiel) solidité, causes, contradictions apparent (apparent).</p> <p>apparentement [apaxa] nm (Pol) grouping of electoral lists (in proportional representation system).</p> <p>apparenter (s') [apaxa] (1) vpr s'~ à (Pol) to ally o.s. with (in elections); (par mariage) to marry into; (ressembler) to be similar to, have certain similarities to.</p> <p>appariement [apaxa] nm (V apparier) matching; pairing; mating.</p> <p>apparer [apaxa] (1) vt (littérat) (assortir) to match; (coupler) to pair; (accoupler) to mate.</p> <p>apparteur [apaxa] nm (Univ) attendant (in French Universities); (hum) ~ muscle strong-arm porter ou attendant (hired at times of student unrest).</p> <p>appartition [apaxa] nf (a) (manifestation) (étoile, symptôme, signe) appearance, (personne) appearance, arrival; (boutons, fièvre) outbreak, (aire sou ~ personne) to make one's appearance, turn up, appear, (symptôme) to appear; il n'a fait qu'une ~ he only put in a brief appearance.</p> <p>(b) (vision) apparition; (fantôme) apparition, spectre, avoir des ~s to see ou have visions.</p> <p>apparoître [apaxa] vb impers (frm, hum) il appert (de ces résultats) que it appears ou is evident (from these results) that.</p> <p>appartement [apaxa] nm (a) flat (Brit), apartment (US); (hôtel) suite; V chère, plate; (b) (Can) room.</p> <p>appartenance [apaxa] nf (a) (race, famille) belonging (à to), membership (à of), (parti) adherence (à to), membership (à of), (Math) ~ à un ensemble membership of a set. (b) (Jur) ~s appartenances.</p>
--	--

Extract from the Introduction to Collins Robert French Dictionary.

The entire introduction is 14 pages long and discusses in French and English all the features present in the dictionary, and the rationale behind them.

There is also a 2 page list of abbreviations, field labels and style labels, and a 6 page description of French and English pronunciation.

Orthographe	Prononciation	Fonction grammaticale
Subdivisions des sans et des emplois	Conjugaison	
Définition	Exemple	
Participe passé sans valeur particulière	Renvoi à un synonyme	
	Emploi particulier important	

Extract from the Présentation of the Micro-Robert.

The entire introduction is 6 pages long and discusses the various features of the dictionary.

There is a 3 page list of abbreviations, in addition.

Définition (spécifiant la nature du sujet du verbe)	Renvoi à un dérivé
Renvoi à un contraire	Expression mise en vedette

perties of the French language (the sort of intuitive understanding that adult native speakers might be expected to possess).⁸ To a certain extent these factors are really a function of the level of language acquisition of the consultant, but even at a given level (such as the levels of the students who are the object of the present study), there will be a wide variation.

Both production and, particularly, comprehension require a certain input on the dictionary consultant's part. In the case of comprehension there is clearly the knowledge that the dictionary consultant has of the immediate and wider context of an unknown word. This is not specifically a dictionary related reference skill though, because it is obviously a skill which is present in contextual guessing as well. However there are specific reference skills related to the dictionary itself i.e. knowledge of dictionary conventions. These are, in brief, the following:

- 1) abbreviations of grammatical classes, n., adj., vi, vt, etc. and of field labels and style labels;
- 2) the significance of the symbols used: ~, (), || , // etc.;
- 3) the significance of different type faces.

Although to a certain extent only long-term use of a dictionary will allow the user to be confident about these variables as well as about the dictionary's treatment of derivatives, compound words, fixed expressions, etc., information of this sort is usually contained in the introduction to the dictionary, or in a list of abbreviations. However dictionary introductions are probably rarely read, and in any case the use of such conventions is applied inconsistently. It is clear though that familiarity with the conventions of the dictionary would be helpful.

In Figure 1, opposite, extracts from entries in two dictionaries are shown as they appear in the introductions of the relevant dictionaries. The wealth of information available, and the care to which the compilers have gone to be helpful to the user is apparent. There remains the

8. Dubois, J., 'Models of the Dictionary: Evolution in Dictionary Design', Applied Linguistics, II(3), p.245, 1981.

question of how ready many dictionary consultants are to tap this information and use it to advantage.

Previous studies on student use of dictionaries.

Despite the universality of dictionary use among foreign language learners, or perhaps because of it, little research has been published on this subject. Certainly, there is evidence of increasing interest in the design of dictionaries specifically for native, second and foreign language learners, but there are few descriptions available of the actual use that dictionary consultants make of their dictionaries.

None of the available studies of dictionary usage among foreign language learners is directly comparable to the present one, but their findings do provide some basis for comparison. There have been four recent studies of dictionary usage among university foreign language students, which have some relevance to the present work. The pertinent results of these studies are reported below. In chronological order they are as follows:

1. Tomaszczyk (1979)⁹

Tomaszczyk, a teacher at the University of Lodz (Poland), obtained questionnaire responses from, among a large number of others, what he called 'foreign language learners' in universities and colleges. Among this group there were 167 language students (i.e. students studying a foreign language, as opposed to students studying in a foreign language environment).

On average this group of language students used one (mean 1.0) monolingual dictionary, at least two (2.4) bilingual dictionaries (or 1.2 in effect since the L1 - L2 and L2 - L1 were listed separately) and one (1.2) specialised dictionary. Almost all the students (95 per cent)

9. Tomaszczyk, J., 'Dictionaries: users and uses', Glottodidactica, XII, 103-119, 1979.

reported using a bilingual dictionary and about 80 percent a monolingual dictionary. They were most satisfied with their monolingual dictionary, and marginally more satisfied with their L2 - L1 dictionary (or part thereof) than their L1 - L2 one (or part thereof). Dictionaries were used at least 'from time to time' for all language activities e.g. over 90 per cent of the respondents used them for reading, writing and translation from L2 to L1. Dictionaries were least used for listening and speaking.

When analysis was restricted simply to the activities of reading, writing and translation (to and from the foreign language) then Tomaszczyk found that about 90 per cent of the respondents used bilingual dictionaries (at least as a starting-point), 75 per cent used them for reading and 68 per cent for writing. Despite the fact that the students rated their monolingual dictionaries more highly than their bilingual ones, few used them on their own. However, when respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their monolingual dictionary vis-à-vis their bilingual dictionary for information about definitions and equivalents it was clear that although a higher proportion used a bilingual dictionary for this purpose (98 per cent compared with 85 per cent) there was greater satisfaction with the information found in the monolingual dictionary.

Tomaszczyk concluded that, "a vast majority of foreign language learners ... use dictionaries but, quite understandably, their dependence on dictionaries decreases as their command of the language increases", that "although the use of monolingual dictionaries becomes more extensive and frequent as the subjects' sophistication increases, almost all of them continue to use bilingual ones. All subjects consider L1 - L2 dictionaries inferior to L2 - L1 ones, and both these types are felt to be inferior to monolingual dictionaries...", and finally that, "while the advanced learners ... seem to know what they can expect of their dictionaries and appear to be getting the most out of them, many beginning and intermediate learners do not know their dictionaries well enough".¹⁰

10. Ibid, p.116.

Tomaszczyk wondered why monolingual dictionaries commanded so much respect compared with bilingual dictionaries. Was it, he asked, due to differences in their qualities which could be established objectively, or was it that people were simply led to believe that bilingual dictionaries could not be as good as monolingual ones?

Baxter (1980)¹¹

Baxter, a teacher of Japanese university students majoring in English, believed that the frequency with which his students were at a loss for words in oral work was due to their use of bilingual dictionaries, which encourage students to believe that there is always an equivalent (or 'unit lexical item') for a word known in their native language. Students, he says, begin to talk, then suddenly stop and are unable to continue, as they desperately seek in their mental vocabulary list for the appropriate word. The use of the monolingual dictionary, on the other hand, encourages students to realise that paraphrase or definition (explanation) is an alternative when they do not know the precise lexical item.

Having recognised the harmful potential influence of the use of bilingual dictionaries on his students' oral English, Baxter sought more detailed information on their dictionary habits and preferences. His questionnaire was administered to, among others, 62 English language majors at Japanese universities. All the students had bought bilingual dictionaries, usually while still at school. Monolingual dictionaries were bought by English majors only when they reached university: mean ownership was 3.8 bilingual dictionaries (equivalent to 1.9 since L1 - L2 and L2 - L1 dictionaries were separate items) and 1.7 monolingual dictionaries. The students overwhelmingly favoured their bilingual dictionaries for use (98per cent used one at least weekly compared with 66per cent a monolingual dictionary). When asked why they preferred their bilingual to their monolingual dictionary, the most common reply was that it was easier to use. The experience of having to look up several of the

11. Baxter, J., 'The Dictionary and Vocabulary Behavior: a Single Word or a Handful', TESOL Quarterly, XIV(3), 325-36, 1980.

words used in a definition was frequently commented on. For this reason, Baxter concluded that the most appropriate dictionary for these students would be a learners' dictionary, a monolingual one with a controlled defining vocabulary. However, he did recognise that students used to consulting bilingual dictionaries would not be successful with monolingual ones without "careful guidance".

Béjoint (1981)¹²

Béjoint sought information on the language needs and reference skills of a particular group of dictionary users viz. 122 university students at the University of Lyon who were intending to become English teachers, and whom he considered as "representative of the average French student using monolingual English dictionaries." (his study was limited to monolingual dictionary usage).

Béjoint found that 96 per cent of his student respondents owned at least one monolingual dictionary (mainly learners' dictionaries), the vast majority of which had been bought on their tutors' recommendation in their first or second year at university. In fact few students knew of any monolingual dictionaries other than those recommended by their tutors, which emphasises, Béjoint says, their dependence on the opinions of their tutors. Usage of monolingual dictionaries was high (92 per cent used one at least once a week). What types of information did the students look for most often in their monolingual dictionary? Meaning (87 per cent ranked it among the three most sought-after pieces of information), syntactic information (53 per cent), synonyms (52 per cent), spelling (25 per cent), pronunciation (25 per cent), language variety (19 per cent), etymology (5 per cent). These results, like Tomaszczyk's, show an overriding preoccupation with meaning, and suggest, Béjoint argues, that for students the "dictionary is basically an inventory of words with glosses." It also, he adds, suggests that the dictionary (at least the monolingual one) is mainly used for decoding

12. Béjoint, H., 'The Foreign Student's Use of Monolingual English Dictionaries: A Study of Language Needs and Reference Skills', Applied Linguistics, II, 207-22, 1981.

(comprehension), since meanings are unlikely to be used for encoding (production). Students mainly used their dictionaries for translation (English-French) (86per cent), written comprehension (60per cent), written composition and prose (French-English) (58per cent) and least for oral comprehension (14per cent) and oral composition (9per cent). Monolingual dictionaries, then, according to Béjoint (and Tomaszczyk) are more frequently used for written work than oral work, and more for comprehension (or decoding) than production (or encoding).

Students, generally, were not fully aware of the conventions (and codes) of their monolingual dictionaries. However, they were generally satisfied with them (36 per cent more so than their bilingual dictionary, 17per cent less so, and the rest - 47 per cent - presumably were equally satisfied). Those who were more satisfied with their monolingual dictionary gave reasons: "the monolingual dictionary is more useful when you need to know the exact meaning of a word, or when you need synonyms". However, as in Tomaszczyk's study, students also commented that the use of the monolingual dictionary called for greater linguistic sophistication on the part of the user.

Béjoint drew a few "tentative" conclusions from his study: like Tomaszczyk, he found that most foreign language learners use dictionaries, that monolingual dictionaries were on the whole considered useful and satisfactory, and more so than bilingual ones. However, unlike Tomaszczyk, he did not believe that 'advanced' learners (among whom he included his respondents) know their dictionaries and obtain the most from them. Rather, he found that monolingual dictionaries were not used as fully as they might be: "their introductions are not commonly referred to, and neither are their coding systems for syntactic patterns. Certainly many students are not even aware of the riches that their monolingual dictionaries contain."¹³ Béjoint noted that students mainly used monolingual dictionaries for comprehension: it is for production, on the other hand, that students need most information; it is this information which is most difficult to

13. Ibid, p.219.

provide (for the lexicographer) and which his students used least. Given this lack of sophistication, Béjoint concluded that monolingual dictionaries destined for native speakers might be just as useful as special learners' dictionaries (the opposite conclusion reached, though for different reasons, by Baxter). However, because Béjoint's study was restricted to monolingual dictionaries, he was perhaps ignoring the possibility that his students seek the information necessary for production in their bilingual dictionaries.

Galisson (1983)¹⁴

Galisson surveyed graduate students in French language at Middlebury College in the U.S.A. and at the University of Paris III. The results summarised here will be restricted to the former group of 48 students.

Each student possessed an average 3.1 monolingual dictionaries and 2.5 bilingual dictionaries (100 per cent owned a monolingual one, 98 per cent a bilingual one). The monolingual dictionaries were very diverse (general, specialised, technical) while the bilingual dictionaries were usually general ones. What did these students use their dictionaries for? (No distinction was made in the presentation of results between bilingual and monolingual dictionaries except that the latter were consulted more than twice as often as the former). Uses were: meaning or definition of a word (94 per cent), spelling (60 per cent) synonyms (46 per cent), usage (42 per cent), gender (35 per cent), equivalents (33 per cent), locutions or idiomatic expressions (17 per cent), antonyms (17 per cent), etymology (13 per cent), pronunciation (13 per cent), register (8 per cent), the preposition required (8 per cent), etc. However, since respondents had to nominate these 'uses' themselves, this does not probably represent a true picture of their usage of dictionaries. Galisson concluded that their dictionary usage was banal (and similar in both foreign and native language); the uses of a dictionary which were more "digne" of professionals of the language and of dictionaries (datation, etymology, register, etc.) receiving few votes.

14. Galisson, R., op. cit.

Because his 'students' were also actual or potential French language teachers, Galisson also asked them which dictionaries they recommended to their pupils and why, and for what uses they recommended dictionaries be consulted. 29 of his 48 'students' responded to these questions. Of them 79 per cent (23) did recommend a dictionary to their pupils (2 monolingual only, 11 bilingual only, 9 both). The reasons for recommending particular dictionaries included cost, availability, bilingual preference for beginners, monolingual preference for more advanced students, conciseness, ease of use, abundance of current expressions (a monolingual dictionary), good word definitions (monolingual) etc. The uses recommended were similar to those given by the teachers for their own use i.e. meaning of unknown words, usage, spelling, gender, pronunciation and equivalents, although a reasonably high proportion also recommended their use for vocabulary enrichment. Galisson concluded that the reasons given for recommending a particular dictionary showed a fairly superficial knowledge of the dictionary as a tool. In fact, the arguments most often advanced were of a pedagogical type (this label is surely questionable), i.e. clarity, precision, ease of use, convenience, completeness. Lexicographical arguments (such as the grouping of words into families, abundance of examples, quality of the definitions, indications of register, etc.) were so rare, Galisson said, as to cast doubt on the ability of these teachers to recommend dictionaries. However, Galisson did concede that the teachers had no particular competence in lexicography. The teachers were similarly condemned for the usage that they recommended their students make of dictionaries: often these recommendations were, Galisson says, "superflues, parce que trop prosaïques."¹⁵

Since none of these four studies is directly comparable to either each other or to the present work, only the most general conclusions can be drawn from them, that is: that the vast majority of the foreign language students used dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual, that they used them more for written work than for oral or aural work, that they consulted them largely for meaning (or equivalents),

15. Ibid, p.36.

for spelling, gender, usage (including syntactic information) and synonyms, and rarely for register and etymological information. The quantity of dictionary use was apparent. There was some divergence of opinion on its quality, i.e. on whether or not advanced learners obtained as much from their dictionaries as they should. Certainly, there was a feeling, among some of these researchers at least, that even quite advanced students were unsophisticated in their use of dictionaries, although to some extent this conclusion may result from the limited nature of the research designs themselves.

Strategy for contextual guessing.

The findings of a fifth study, unrelated to the above descriptions of dictionary usage, but which inspired the collecting of recorded protocols in the present work (described in Chapter 4), will be briefly discussed. Van Parreren¹⁶, a Dutch researcher, has investigated the skills involved in using context to determine the meanings of unknown words. In his study subjects were asked to 'think aloud' while guessing the meaning of unknown words in foreign language texts. The 'thinking aloud' protocols were subjected to error analysis.

The protocol analyses revealed first of all that a subject may act on different linguistic levels. These levels are as follows: a) syntactic level - when the subject tries to sort out the grammatical structure of a sentence; b) semantic level - when the subject explores the immediate or wider context of the unknown word to find its (global) meaning; c) lexical level - when the subject inspects the form of the word to derive its meaning; finally, d) stylistic level - when the subject tries to appreciate the exact, stylistic use of a word whose meaning has already been deduced. The protocol analyses indicated that there was a hierarchical organisation of levels, with the syntactic level below the semantic level. Van Parreren found that it was only possible for a subject to act correctly at one level if

16. Van Parreren, C.F. and M.C. Schouten-Van Parreren, 'Contextual guessing: a trainable reader strategy', System, 9(3), 235-241, 1981.

no error had been made at a lower level.

Since, in order to find the meaning of an unknown word in a dictionary, the consultant must first have some idea what it means (subconsciously, perhaps), so that it is possible to choose between possible meanings (or equivalents), dictionary consultation would appear to be analogous to contextual guessing. However, Clarke and Nation have suggested that the information gained from the dictionary is "in most cases ... a confirmation or an extension of what has already been guessed."¹⁷ This implies that the dictionary consultant goes through Van Parreren's hierarchy and having 'failed' to work out the word then seeks it in the dictionary. Van Parreren also identified errors made at different levels, most of which were caused by a subject acting at a higher level when he had not correctly acted at a lower level. Apart from errors specific to individual levels there were also general errors which can be described as being due to the forming of premature hypotheses or to a failure to check a hypothesis for its 'fit' in the immediate and wider context.

The aim of the exercise involving recorded protocols in the present work was to try to cast some light on the strategy involved in dictionary consultation for the meaning of unknown words.

The aims of the present study.

It is apparent that the reference needs and reference skills of the dictionary consultant, on the one hand, and the nature of the dictionary consulted, on the other hand, are the major variables which affect the outcome of dictionary consultation. Students' attitudes to, preferences for, and uses of dictionaries will be shaped by a number of factors including, initially at least, the attitudes and preferences of their teachers.

The present study presents a description of actual dictionary use among a group of advanced French language

17. Clarke D.F. and I.S.P. Nation, 'Guessing the meanings of words from context: Strategy and techniques', System, 8, p.217, 1980.

learners. The description has three components:

- 1) teachers of seventh form, Stage I and II French language students completed a questionnaire on their preferences for dictionaries for their students, their views on the relative merits of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, the errors they detect in students' work which they attribute to dictionary use, the instruction they give on dictionary use, etc. These results are discussed in Chapter 2.
- 2) Seventh form, Stage I, II, III and M.A. students completed questionnaires on their use of dictionaries, in general terms and for specific purposes, their dictionary preferences, etc. These results are discussed in Chapter 3.
- 3) two groups of students were asked to describe their use of dictionaries in relation to specific tasks (as opposed to the generalised description of student behaviour given in 2) above). (Discussed in Chapter 4.)

The picture presented does not pretend to be a comprehensive one, or even one which is necessarily generalisable to other similar student populations. It is simply a description of the behaviour and attitudes of selected students and teachers variously involved in the teaching/learning process that the study of French as a foreign language represents in the New Zealand context.

CHAPTER 2

TEACHERS' OPINIONS OF STUDENT DICTIONARY USEIntroduction.

It is apparent that French teachers have an influence on their students' use of dictionaries, if only initially in their recommendations of particular dictionaries. To this end, seventh form French teachers (in Christchurch secondary schools) and Stage I and II French lecturers (in the six New Zealand universities) were surveyed to ascertain their opinions on student dictionary usage.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) was completed by 12 seventh form teachers representing a range of schools (state and private, single-sex and co-educational) and by university lecturers responsible for Stage I and II mainstream language classes at five of the six universities (Victoria providing no replies). Seven lecturers at both Stage I and II levels responded. Completed questionnaires were also received from a number of lecturers responsible for special language courses, generally for students with little or no previous knowledge of French, but because of the extremely varied nature of these courses, they have been excluded from the analyses which follow.

The questions to which responses were sought will be discussed in turn.

Q.1 (a) Do you recommend that your French students, at this level, purchase a dictionary? If you do, which one(s)?

(b) Could you explain what factors influenced your choice of dictionary for these particular students (factors may include: cost, availability, bilingual preference,

monolingual preference, most up-to-date, etc.)?

- (c) Are there other dictionaries that you recommend your students use, though not purchase, which are available in the Library or Department? If so, which one(s)?

Seventh form teachers.

A number of seventh form teachers were actually responsible for all French teaching in their schools and so gave a wider view in their responses to the questions. Generally, the teachers do not recommend their students buy a French dictionary. Two said that only if their students are planning to continue their French at university do they recommend the purchase of a dictionary (one mentioned the Harrap's Standard dictionary as her choice); four recommend that their students buy a dictionary (Harrap's Pocket, Collins Robert, Harrap's New Shorter and the Dictionnaire du français contemporain (the DFC) were named). Some schools, of course, provide dictionaries for their students to borrow; one school provides a copy of Harrap's Concise for each student. Others have dictionaries available in the teaching room for their students and because of the very small numbers of students enrolled in French, this is equivalent to one dictionary per student. Several teachers do not recommend dictionaries at all, but if asked for advice two mentioned that they would recommend Collins Gem - basically because of its convenient size. Apart from one teacher who recommends to her particularly able students the purchase of a monolingual French dictionary (the DFC) all other teachers who either recommend or provide dictionaries for borrowing, mentioned bilingual dictionaries.

The factors influencing the teachers' choices of dictionaries did not include 'bilingual preference', perhaps because it went without saying. Rather, the reasons given for recommending a particular dictionary were as follows: Harrap's Concise - "because both French and English teachers use them [Harrap dictionaries] in France and here"; for various named pocket dictionaries - cost; Harrap's Pocket dictionary - cost, compactness, well set-out, up-to-date;

Harrap's 2 volume Standard dictionary - "I don't know of any others; I haven't really looked for years"; Collins Robert - availability, up-to-date; Harrap's New Shorter - cost, availability and English-French part is "more or less adequate", and for the one monolingual dictionary recommended (the DFC) - "it's the one I'm used to." Apart, then, from this last, teachers recommend dictionaries which are bilingual and either compact and therefore relatively portable and cheap or larger sized and more complete (these latter dictionaries, the Collins Robert and Harrap's New Shorter, may be 'complete' but their cost* would tend to make their purchase rather unrealistic).

All the schools at which the teachers taught, have dictionaries for the students to consult and these are often available in the room where teaching takes place. Because French classes typically contain few students all of them, it may be assumed, should have ready access to one of the 'larger' dictionaries, if they so choose.

Stage I lecturers

At Stage I level, three of the university French Departments advise their students to purchase bilingual dictionaries (Otago, Massey and Waikato) and three, monolingual dictionaries (Canterbury, Victoria and Auckland).

The dictionaries recommended are as follows:

Table 1 : Dictionaries recommended for purchase: Stage I

University	Monolingual	Bilingual
Otago	-	<u>Collins Robert</u>
Canterbury	<u>Robert SNL Micro-poche</u>	-
Victoria	<u>DFC</u> ^o	-
Massey	-	<u>Harrap's Shorter</u>
Waikato	-	<u>Harrap's Shorter</u> (Ed. J.E. Mansion)
Auckland	<u>Micro-Robert</u> or <u>DFC</u>	-

Notes: (1) ^oInformation from Victoria was obtained from a questionnaire completed in 1984 on a similar subject.

* Current costs of some of the dictionaries recommended by seventh form and university French teachers are given in Appendix B.

- (2) At Auckland students who plan advanced study in French, particularly of French literature, are recommended to buy either the Petit Robert or Larousse Lexis.
- (3) The dictionaries are listed as described by the lecturers concerned i.e. it is assumed that Collins Robert refers to the Collins Robert French Dictionary (and not to the smaller Collins Robert Concise), that Harrap's Shorter is either that, or Harrap's New Shorter, although Waikato did specify the J.E. Mansion edition, that the DFC is that or the Nouveau DFC (illustré) which first appeared in 1980, and that the Micro-Robert is that or its more recent printing the Robert SNL Micro-Poche. Whatever the edition recommended, students may buy the superseded one as is the case at Canterbury where some students have bought second-hand copies of the Micro-Robert and others new copies of the Robert SNL Micro-Poche.

Why did these Stage I lecturers recommend particular dictionaries? Bilingual dictionaries are recommended because of the following factors: "easily used, cost, up-to-date" (Collins Robert), "cost, availability, bilingual preference for first-years but should/could be supplemented by monolingual dictionaries" (Harrap's Shorter) and "cost, bilingual" (Harrap's Shorter). Monolingual dictionaries are recommended because they are monolingual and also because of cost (Micro-Robert) and because of "cost, availability and also because it [the DFC] is a 'teaching' dictionary with helpful grammatical and lexical tables/charts."

As might be expected, a wide range of dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual, are recommended by university lecturers and made available to their students for consultation in libraries or Departments. Those dictionaries recommended tended to be the larger dictionaries, (e.g. Petit Robert, Lexis, Harrap's New Standard) some of which would not be available routinely for students to purchase or would be too expensive.

Stage II lecturers.

The dictionaries recommended by Stage II French language teachers, and the reasons for their recommendations are as follows:

Table 2 : Dictionaries recommended for purchase: Stage II

	Dictionary(ies) recommended	Reasons for recommendation
Otago	<u>Harrap's New Shorter or Collins Robert</u>	Most useful, up-to-date for their purposes, not too costly.
Canterbury	<u>Micro-Robert</u>	Already recommended for Stage I, which makes it cheap, available as well as up-to-date.
Victoria°	<u>Petit Robert</u>	
Massey	Any bilingual (<u>Harrap's Shorter</u>) plus any monolingual (<u>DFC</u> or <u>Hachette</u> or <u>Petit Robert</u> if continuing to Stage III, or <u>Petit Larousse</u> if also enrolled in Fr. civilisation course)	Cost - need for both bilingual and monolingual at second-year level of competence. Larousse - need for encyclopaedic information.
Auckland (special translation course)	Advancing students - at least <u>Harrap's Shorter</u> - if really keen <u>Harrap's Standard</u> plus monolingual (e.g. <u>DFC</u>) <u>Harrap's Standard</u> plus <u>Larousse Lexis</u>	Harrap's updated dictionaries still command respect. Monolingual essential to check usage. This is an ideal combination: students encouraged to buy the <u>Lexis</u> , at least, and have ready access to Harrap.

Note: ° As for Table 1.

Two of the three French Departments who recommend bilingual dictionaries only at Stage I recommend both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries at Stage II level.

Apart from dictionaries recommended for student purchase and listed above, a large number of dictionaries (the larger monolingual and bilingual ones) and specialised dictionaries (of synonyms, slang, etc.) are generally available for French

students, and recommended by their lecturers in varying ways.

Q.2 Many language teachers, particularly at university level, recommend monolingual dictionaries for their students or at least express the hope that their students will use them. Do you have any theories, ideas, opinions to support or refute such recommendations/hopes?

Seventh form teachers

Two of the twelve teachers did not respond to this question (both recommend larger, up-to-date bilingual dictionaries to their students). Two teachers whose teaching concerns range from third to seventh formers stated that monolingual dictionaries were too difficult for third - fifth formers; "these students prefer to use bilingual dictionaries and so do I", but thought that it was a "good idea" for sixth and seventh formers to consult a monolingual dictionary. Other teachers thought that even at seventh form level there are problems with monolingual dictionaries; "monolingual is fine, of course, if you know or have an idea of the French word you want to use, but at High School I doubt that a pupil's vocabulary is always extensive enough to be able to do this"; "they don't have the language level to make sufficient use of them"; "the lack of virtually any French vocabulary mastery precludes the usefulness of monolingual dictionaries. Pupils have enough trouble sorting out n./a./adj./v.t./v.i. in English dictionaries"; "the students' needs are more basic, they do not think solely within the second language - they use English to get meaning when the vocabulary is new." However, despite this general awareness of the potential difficulties that their students might experience with monolingual dictionaries some teachers did see their advantage in giving more accurate shades of meaning, or for obtaining exact equivalents (starting with a bilingual dictionary), although, as one teacher commented: "I think they probably need some instruction and encouragement in using a monolingual dictionary, which will be new to them".

Stage I lecturers.

Even among Stage I teachers there was one who still felt that a monolingual dictionary is too demanding particularly for the average to below average student. However, for better students, another lecturer at the same university (where bilingual dictionaries are recommended) provides only monolingual dictionaries for group work in class. At another university recommending a bilingual dictionary, the lecturer could still see that monolingual dictionaries have a role to play as "a useful means of verification that a given French term in fact expresses the idea assumed since equivalents supplied (i.e. French for English) without actual definitions can be misleading." At still another university the lecturer said that despite such recommendations (that students should use monolingual dictionaries) students prefer bilingual ones and "so we make a good one available." Those lecturers who recommend monolingual dictionaries responded as follows: one based his preference for the monolingual dictionary on, as he put it, "the untested assumption that the description/explanation plus examples of a monolingual dictionary give a more accurate idea of usage than the translation plus examples of a bilingual dictionary." At another university the use of monolingual dictionaries is part of a "strategy of total immersion in the foreign language." To this end students are encouraged to work in French as much as possible. Emphasis is placed on seeking synonymous expressions, derivations, etc. With monolingual dictionaries "students are more likely to pay attention to collocations ..., also to the problem of register."

There was, among these Stage I lecturers, a reasonable degree of consensus that monolingual dictionaries do have their advantages; however, presumably those who recommend bilingual dictionaries instead, do not think that these advantages outweigh their disadvantages.

Stage II lecturers.

At Stage II level, as has already been pointed out, there was even greater acceptance of the need for monolingual dictionaries so that two of the three university Departments

which recommend bilingual dictionaries at Stage I, recommend both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries at Stage II. At one such university the lecturer encourages the use of a monolingual dictionary for "definition work and for exercises involving synonyms and antonyms". Another said that monolingual dictionaries appear to be necessary at second-year level but are "still difficult". "[Monolingual dictionaries]", she wrote, "provide more exposure to the target language, encourage understanding of meaning within the system of the language and not by way of comparison with the mother tongue, are necessary for developing a sense of the patterns of the target language, and are a means of beginning a 'weaning' process." One lecturer who recommends monolingual dictionaries believes that they are "more modern, and representative, therefore, of current language use." This view was echoed by another lecturer who felt that no matter how competent the Harrap compilers might be, they could not better a French dictionary compiled for French speakers, as far as usage was concerned. Despite this, he did see certain disadvantages in the monolingual dictionary (the DFC) which he recommends. Usage, then, it was conceded, is best displayed in the monolingual dictionary; there remains the question, hardly touched upon here, of the ability of the students to appreciate it.

Q.3 In connection with this question of monolingual or bilingual dictionaries do you give your students any advice on the relative merits of these two types of dictionaries?

Seventh form teachers.

Most of the teachers did not respond to this question, presumably because they do not recommend the use of monolingual dictionaries at all, for, as one commented "none of my students is linguistically advanced enough to obtain clarity from a monolingual dictionary." Those few who give advice on the relative merits of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries do so by pointing out that the former helps to give more accurate shades of meaning and usage.

Stage I lecturers.

Generally, the lecturers who recommend bilingual dictionaries do not give their students advice on their merits vis-à-vis monolingual dictionaries. At one university where monolingual dictionaries are recommended, time is taken at the beginning of the year to point out some of the 'pit-falls' of bilingual dictionaries, for example, "when several French 'equivalents' are given, but where selection is determined by context/collocation, as with the verb 'to break'." Another lecturer emphasises the importance of using the monolingual dictionary and advises his students only to use the bilingual dictionary when they are really "stuck".

Stage II lecturers.

Two lecturers do not discuss this question with their students (one recommends a bilingual dictionary, the other a monolingual one). Where both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries are recommended lecturers indicate the circumstances in which students might find it helpful to consult a monolingual dictionary and try to show them why: "I suggest they use monolingual dictionaries for verifying the contexts in which certain words are used even when they are doing exercises for which I suggest they use a bilingual dictionary as a first source, i.e. proses and analytical (academic) exercises. I suggest they use both for translation." For lecturers who recommend monolingual dictionaries there is a recognition that students also use bilingual ones. The need to cross-check in a monolingual dictionary is emphasised, "nothing beats a French dictionary compiled by French persons for French persons."

Q.4 If you recommend a monolingual dictionary, are you aware of any difficulties your students have in using it, and to what do you attribute these difficulties?

Seventh form teachers.

Obviously, one teacher wrote, if students have no idea of the French equivalents of words they need, the monolingual dictionary is inappropriate. Other teachers commented on the

difficulties students have with understanding the definitions because of their lack of vocabulary. One teacher observed that using a monolingual rather than a bilingual dictionary is slower and harder work.

Stage I lecturers.

Only one lecturer at this level commented on the problem caused by a lack of vocabulary in reading and understanding the definitions of the monolingual dictionary. Another said that students often have difficulty in selecting the right meaning in very long entries, a problem which is evidently not specific to monolingual dictionaries. One lecturer who recommends the DFC dictionary (in which there is extensive grouping together of words and their derivatives) said that a lack of awareness on the students' part of 'word families' can be a problem. The students, he wrote, sometimes experience frustration when they find an entry for say "lecture" and are referred to the head-word "lire" (or find no entry at all for "mort" which is under the head-word "mourir"). The monolingual dictionary is, of course, inappropriate as a starting point when the student has no idea of the French; it may be, as one lecturer observed, "useful for checking a hypothesis (in comprehension), but no use for forming a hypothesis (in production)."

Stage II lecturers.

One lecturer did not know of any difficulties his students might have with monolingual dictionaries, though, as he admitted, they may not use them. Another lecturer did not see any problems which were specific to the use of monolingual dictionaries "save the universal one of students having grossly inadequate time to work freely and reflectively in an autonomous fashion." A bilingual dictionary, he continued, may offer "a rapid mechanical word-exchange approach, but not a long-term avenue for growth in linguistic range and experience." A lecturer recommending the DFC and Lexis, in both of which there is extensive use of word-families, felt that students have problems with this and with the lack of entries in the DFC. Problems due to a lack of understanding of French were commented on by one lecturer, as

follows: "An obvious inability to 'understand' the exact connotations of a word or to understand its meanings as clearly as the meanings of an equivalent English word with which they are familiar." Finally, one lecturer commented that "the difficulties students unfortunately seem to have in handling an English dictionary are exacerbated e.g. the tendency to ignore or misunderstand abbreviations, indications concerning usage or context, etc." - not, it could be added, a problem which is peculiar to monolingual dictionaries, be they English or French, as teachers' responses to the next question show.

Q.5 In students' written work (at least) you have no doubt observed errors which may be linked to dictionary use or misuse. Can you give any examples of these errors? What type of error are they usually? To what do you attribute these errors?

Seventh form teachers.

The most common type of error described and that, of course, which is the easiest to illustrate, is due to the student choosing the wrong French equivalent when the English word they want to express in French has more than one meaning. The examples given are obviously the type that are easily remembered by teachers, viz. "j'ai joué à la cigale" (I played cricket), "être enceinte..." (to be expecting someone to...), using "dos" for "to go back", "il atteignit la banque" (he swam to the bank), "des paroles genres" (kind words) etc. These examples illustrate the problem of students failing to distinguish between different meanings of the English word ('cricket', the game or the insect) and, more seriously, since it may be indicative of a more fundamental problem, of failing to distinguish between different parts of speech ('expecting', verb or adjective, 'kind', adjective or noun, etc.). Sometimes, even, the students do not know how to spell the English word and so use the wrong French word.

It would appear, then, that students may fail to distinguish the different meanings of the English word or to distinguish between different parts of speech, choosing in-

stead the first French equivalent they come to. However, at least some of the problem may be due to a lack of understanding or knowledge of word function. As one teacher explained: "Grammar is no longer an integral part of English teaching, so even if the [dictionary]abbreviations were known, it might not be much help to the present day teenager."

Some teachers, however, felt that the types of errors mentioned above, at least in their most glaring forms, are no longer a problem at seventh form level, or are at least restricted to the weaker students. Only one teacher suggested that any fault might lie with a lack of clarity on the dictionary's part.

Stage I lecturers.

Some seventh form teachers felt that errors due to 'carelessness' are no longer a problem at that level; however, Stage I lecturers were still observing them. Evidently though, these 'classic' examples of errors, as they may well be, are memorable by their very nature, but may occur less frequently as students advance in their French language studies. The examples given by Stage I lecturers were as follows: "le bateau a évié" (the boat sank), "j'étais boulet" (I was shot), "moyens" (for the verb means). To what did lecturers attribute this type of error? Generally, to the students paying insufficient attention. Other errors described include the use of archaic words, despite their labelling as such, failure to observe fields of meaning, and failure to check the part of speech involved. All these errors of 'failure to....' refer to the production of French. Other errors which might occur in either production or comprehension were attributed to "failure to study the context/ collocation of a French word", and by another lecturer, who ranked errors in decreasing order of frequency, to "(1) failure, through lack of time and/or effort, to read the whole entry carefully, (2) failure to understand the meta-language, (3) inadequate information in the entry" Two lecturers thought that, at least partially, some errors were caused by students failing to double-check information gleaned from the English-French part of the bilingual dictionary in a monolingual dictionary (or in the French-English part of the

bilingual dictionary). Students believe, one lecturer wrote, that what they put "may be right. If not, they'll be told, so why spend even more time checking."

Stage II lecturers.

Errors of the 'classic' kind were also observed in the work of Stage II students e.g. "ils avaient une partie de canotage violente" (they had a violent row), "match de grillon" (cricket match). Even at this level lecturers believe that students tend to choose the first word/expression that seems to 'fit' without checking that a given term is suitable in a certain context. What was this tendency attributed to? "Haste? Carelessness? Ignorance of dictionary conventions?" one lecturer wrote. Or due, another wrote, to the use of a bilingual dictionary without subsequent verification in a monolingual dictionary of contexts, fields of meaning. This type of error, this lecturer felt, is more frequent than those which come from lack of a precise understanding of words defined in a monolingual dictionary (although this might be because students tend to use bilingual dictionaries much more). Once again, practically all the examples given relate to the production of French, perhaps because comprehension is either less often tested, or tested in such a way that mistakes due to possible dictionary misuse are not readily detected.

Q.6 Do you give your students any instruction in the use of dictionaries? (formally in class, informally on request or as the need arises, etc.)

Seventh form teachers.

Most teachers said that they give their students some instruction on dictionary use. However this is usually done on an informal basis, when the misuse of words is observed in written work. No teacher reported setting formal exercises which would require students to familiarise themselves with dictionary layout and conventions.

Stage I lecturers.

Once again instruction is generally informal and given

as the need arises i.e. when a particularly "glaring instance of misuse of dictionaries surfaces in written work."

Stage II lecturers.

At this level too, lecturers reported that their instruction in dictionary use is of an informal nature, carried out when the need arises. One lecturer could see that formal instruction would be useful.

Q.7 Students, or any users for that matter, consult dictionaries in relation to (a) the comprehension of French and (b) the production of French. To which of these two needs do you think dictionaries respond better? Can you draw a distinction between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries in respect of these two needs?

A number of respondents found this question confusing and so analysis of the responses is limited.

Seventh form teachers.

The teachers who appear to have responded 'correctly' to the question generally thought that dictionaries are more useful for comprehension. Teachers distinguished between bilingual and monolingual dictionaries by showing an overwhelming preference for the former as far as comprehension is concerned, whereas for production many conceded that even if the students started with a bilingual dictionary, a monolingual dictionary should be used to check and refine the information found in the bilingual dictionary.

Stage I lecturers.

As one lecturer pointed out, "comprehension and production are incommensurable; therefore the question of whether dictionaries can respond better to one or the other need is a false one." Another lecturer wrote: "At the rather low level expected of my particular students I think the Collins-Robert responds equally well to both needs." Other lecturers distinguished between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries: "if my hypothesis testing/hypothesis forming distinction is valid, then a student who produced

French by translating from English would clearly need a bilingual dictionary." Some lecturers felt that the comprehension of French is measurably enhanced by the use of a monolingual dictionary: "comprehension (i.e. the precise understanding of a given term) is probably better served by monolingual dictionaries", and "at a fairly advanced level, students need to be encouraged to seek comprehension through synonyms, paraphrase in French, hence a monolingual dictionary is more useful, especially if comprehension is not being tested through translation." This same lecturer felt that dictionaries are probably less useful tools for production because of the importance of syntactic components which are not always adequately handled by dictionaries. Finally one lecturer who felt that dictionaries are needed for both, and expressed a firm preference for bilingual dictionaries said: "Personally I've little faith in monolingual dictionaries for either type of work. They add problems rather than solve them."

Stage II lecturers.

"The grasp of language of the average second-year French student", one lecturer wrote, "is such that bilingual dictionaries undoubtedly respond better to both the comprehension and production of French. In my opinion, dictionaries can respond equally well or equally badly to both needs - depending on the command of the language, the intelligence and determination of the user." Bilingual dictionaries, another lecturer commented, have a definite role in solving initial problems whether it be for production or comprehension. This idea of the bilingual dictionary as a starting point for production was echoed by other lecturers, monolingual dictionaries having, apparently, better information on French usage (constructions, register, etc.). As far as comprehension goes one lecturer, at least, discourages students from using a dictionary at all for this purpose, rather trying to get students to deduce meaning from context. Others recommend monolingual dictionaries, with the bilingual dictionary used only when the definition of the former is unclear.

Q.8 As far as the production of French is concerned what do you see as the relative roles of your students' dictionary(ies) and their grammar or text-book if the latter are recommended?

Seventh form teachers.

Most teachers prefer their students to use the information in their text-book/grammar for the production of French: "I much prefer them to use their text-books and phrases which they have already learned rather than to experiment with completely unknown forms" and "Fewer 'dictionary mistakes' if the text-book list of words is used: better to limit themselves to saying what they know how to say, in the production of French." As one teacher pointed out: "Only an able student can successfully extract unfamiliar grammar or vocabulary from a dictionary." Other teachers saw advantages in the dictionary because "some text-books are rather dated and their vocabulary is also. Dictionaries are a lot more up-to-date", or for free composition (as opposed to prose where the text-book, from which presumably it was extracted, would be preferable). One teacher felt that generally students have recourse to the dictionary for production too readily, but that gradually they learn to rely on themselves.

Stage I lecturers.

Generally both dictionaries and text-book/grammars were felt to be useful for the production of French. At the very least dictionaries could be used for checking spelling and gender. To a certain extent the amount of grammar and/or vocabulary in the text-book will be a determining factor here.

Stage II lecturers.

Dictionaries and text-book/grammars were seen as having a complementary role, the information in each overlapping to a significant extent. Both are, as one lecturer wrote, "tools and reference works, the use of which should reduce as the students' experience/ability increases."

Q.9 If you make a particular point of teaching vocabulary, how do you integrate the dictionary into this teaching?

Generally, there is little formal teaching of vocabulary reported at these levels of instruction; a few teachers use the dictionary in work with synonyms and definitions, both of which involve the use of monolingual dictionaries.

Q.10 Finally, which dictionary(ies) do you yourself consult for your own use?

The use of a wide variety of dictionaries was reported (Appendix C). Those used by seventh form teachers tended to reflect their own university student purchases, rather than the dictionaries currently used by University of Canterbury students (monolingual Robert SNL Micro-Poche). Harrap dictionaries, the larger multi-volume versions were commonly used. Most teachers use both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, one only using a bilingual dictionary only, and two using monolingual dictionaries only.

As might be expected, university lecturers tended generally to use more dictionaries (than seventh form teachers), to use more monolingual dictionaries, to use more up-to-date dictionaries, and in a number of cases to own and use the larger multi-volume monolingual dictionaries (e.g. (Grand) Robert, the T.L.F.).

Finally, it should be noted that only a very small proportion of French teachers and lecturers actually use the dictionaries they recommend to their students. This raises the question of how familiar many teachers are with the dictionaries used by their students, be they dictionaries bought on their recommendation or bought by the students themselves.

Summary and discussion.

As will be shown in Chapter 3, the students surveyed were strongly influenced by the recommendations of their teachers in their purchase of dictionaries. The reasons given by teachers for their preference for a particular dictionary were diverse. Seventh form teachers generally preferred bilingual dictionaries for their students although some, perhaps revealing the lack of importance they attribute to the dictionary or their failure to distinguish the differing quality of dictionaries, left the choice up to the students. As students advanced in their studies there was an increasing recognition of the appropriateness of monolingual dictionaries for them. It is not surprising then that at lower levels there was a feeling that students do not have a sufficient grasp of the French language to understand the definitions of monolingual dictionaries.

Leaving aside the bilingual/monolingual preference which was obviously an over-riding factor in many teachers' recommendations of dictionaries, cost was an important factor. However, cost is apparently relative, since some university lecturers recommended dictionaries which cost almost twice as much as other dictionaries recommended and cited cost as a factor in their choice. Few French teachers or lecturers gave lexicographical reasons for favouring one dictionary over another, i.e. reasons such as good quality of definitions, range of examples, good grammatical information, good range of synonyms, clear indication of register. Galisson would, no doubt, condemn them, as he did his teacher respondents, for failing to produce reasons more worthy of their position as language professionals.¹⁸ What he would have to say about those who avoid the problem of dictionary selection altogether by leaving the choice up to their students, can only be guessed at.

Few teachers had any arguments to support or refute the claim that 'monolingual dictionaries are better for more advanced students'. It would seem that there is fairly general agreement with this opinion though it is based more on a 'gut-feeling' than on any firm evidence. However,

18. Galisson, R., op. cit., p.35.

students almost without exception, use bilingual dictionaries for most purposes, even when monolingual dictionaries are recommended (as Chapter 3 shows). That, then, may be the problem with the recommendation of a monolingual dictionary only; it leaves the choice of a bilingual dictionary up to students, and where cost is a factor, the bilingual dictionary bought (and used, since students use the dictionaries they own more than those available in libraries, etc. for consultation) may be inadequate.

Few teachers give their students more than minimal advice about the relative merits of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. Presumably, those who recommend bilingual dictionaries believe that their advantages outweigh their (perceived) disadvantages. Interestingly, though, considering this lack of advice, practically all the errors which teachers mentioned as occurring in students' written work which they attributed to dictionary use or misuse, were related to the use of bilingual dictionaries, although not necessarily attributed to this use. The most common type of error cited, and encouragingly this was cited less frequently by Stage II lecturers than by seventh form teachers, was the students' failure to distinguish the various meanings of an English word and, as a consequence, choose the first French equivalent found, or to distinguish between the different parts of speech, so choosing, for example, a noun when an adjective was required. However, as more than one teacher pointed out, students can no longer be assumed to have the necessary grammatical background, since grammar is not taught systematically in English classes. However, if there is general acceptance of this fact, then it would seem that the remedy must lie with the French teachers. Most of the errors described by these teachers and attributed by them to dictionary use were concerned with the production of French. Although some teachers thought that students might have problems understanding the definitions in monolingual dictionaries, none reported errors due to this, perhaps because they recognised that students would probably then use a bilingual dictionary, and also because comprehension errors are probably less apparent. That is, no teacher specifically attributed 'errors' to the use of monolingual

dictionaries, although a number attributed them to the failure to use them for checking usage, etc. In fact only two teachers, a seventh form one and a Stage I one, attributed error to inadequacies in the dictionary itself. The type of errors, then, that teachers detect in students' written work and which they attribute to dictionary use are almost entirely 'blamed' on the student. Whether this is because these teachers generally believe that dictionaries are always right or not is not clear; perhaps errors which may be attributable to inadequacies in the dictionary are more difficult to detect or assign.

The detection of the more 'blatant' type of error is what generally prompts teachers to give some instruction on dictionary use to their students. This 'instruction' is then given informally and as the need arises. Perhaps because teachers do not detect errors in students' work due to possible inadequacies in the dictionary, and perhaps because they believe that it is student carelessness which causes most errors, no teacher gives any formal instruction on dictionary use (books on this subject are available for French school pupils with exercises designed to encourage familiarity with the many features of the student's own dictionary(ies) and comparison of these features with those of other dictionaries).¹⁹ It is, however, perhaps only by experience that students learn not to trust dictionaries (or their own use of them), and as with so many things, advice which has no immediate relevance, may not be heeded.

Teachers' views on other matters which were canvassed in the questionnaire were predictably diverse. It is apparent, however, that there is a general consensus on the usefulness to foreign language learners of a dictionary, even if some school teachers do not actually recommend any particular dictionary. However, as one university lecturer concluded: "Too great a reliance on a dictionary is not, I believe, a good thing. There is a narrow path between the addicted dictionary user who feels unable to cope if not in the physical presence of his dictionary and the inveterate

19. For example, Collignon, L. and M. Glatigny, Les dictionnaires: initiation à la lexicographie, Paris, Cedic, 1977, 206p.

inventor of short-lived neologisms and solecisms." Correct dictionary use, as another university lecturer commented, "involves time for reflective consultation and critical assessment of findings. Their best use is a product of longer term, maturing familiarity. All these characteristics are at a premium in the overcrowded, over-taught, over-assessed B.A. as it is lived in New Zealand universities. I doubt that the vast majority of language students develop a solid familiarity with a dictionary/dictionaries by the time they finish Stage III." Some information which may shed some illumination on this last comment, is revealed in Chapter 3, where the views of students are discussed.

CHAPTER 3

STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR DICTIONARY USE

Introduction.

There are, as has been explained in Chapter 1, a variety of ways of finding out about the processes involved in student learning. In Chapter 2 the views of teachers on student use of dictionaries were discussed. In this chapter, the students' descriptions of their dictionary use are presented.

Administration of the questionnaire.

Questionnaires (Appendix A) were sent to seventh form teachers at selected Christchurch secondary schools for their students to fill in. The schools represented private and state, single-sex and co-educational schools. Inevitably, because of the preponderance of girls enrolled in seventh form French classes the majority of the questionnaires returned were completed by girls. In all, 35 usable questionnaires were returned from seven different schools (the numbers involved ranged from two students at two schools to thirteen at one school). For six of the seven schools, questionnaires were also received from the seventh form teacher. Although the responses of these students may not be representative of all seventh form French students, the range of schools covered was satisfactory.

Information was also sought from university students in French Departments at two universities where it was known that there was a basic difference at Stage I level in teacher recommended dictionaries, one (Canterbury) recommending a monolingual dictionary, the other (Otago) a bilingual one. Completed forms were returned by 24 Stage I Canterbury

students, 20 Stage I Otago students, 10 Stage II Canterbury and 4 Stage II Otago students (amalgamated for the purposes of analysis) and 7 Stage III and 3 M.A. Canterbury students (also amalgamated for analysis). The response rates ranged from a low of 40% (at Stage II level) to a high of 77% at Stage III and M.A. level. These response rates are in some cases disappointing but reflect to a large extent the problems associated with allowing students to fill in questionnaires in their own time (since questionnaires not completed and returned in class are notoriously difficult to retrieve). It is difficult to make any assumptions about those who did not respond: however, one possibility is that some students thought the questionnaire was irrelevant because they do not use dictionaries at all. This is unlikely.

Results and analysis.

The responses to each question are presented separately for each of the five groups of students: (a) seventh formers (N = 35), (b) Canterbury Stage I (N = 24), (c) Otago Stage I (N = 20), (d) Canterbury and Otago Stage II (N = 14) and (e) Canterbury Stage III and M.A. (N = 10).

Dictionaries used (owned and borrowed)

Tables 3a - e show the dictionaries used by the student respondents classified according to whether the dictionaries are monolingual or bilingual, small, medium, large, or specialised, owned or borrowed. Full details are given in Appendix D. One of the problems with the students' responses concerns the naming of dictionaries. Students were allowed to take the questionnaires home to enable them, supposedly, to check the actual names of their dictionaries. This appears to have only been partially successful.

The information summarised in Tables 3a - e obscures to a certain extent the wide range of dictionary titles used by these French students. In fact the 35 seventh formers use 16 different dictionaries (14 bilingual, 1 monolingual, 1 monolingual specialised), the 24 Canterbury Stage I students use 19 different dictionaries (12 bilingual, 5 monolingual, 1 bilingual specialised, 1 monolingual special-

TABLE 3a: DICTIONARIES USED (OWNED AND BORROWED)

Seventh form students

Dictionary type	Owned	Borrowed	Total used
<u>Monolingual</u>			
'large'	-	-	-
'medium'	-	8	8
'small'	-	-	-
'specialised'	-	1	1
Subtotal	-	9	9
<u>Bilingual</u>			
'large'	2	11	13
'medium'	4	21	25
'small'	15	1	16
'specialised'	-	-	-
Subtotal	21	33	54
TOTAL	21	42	63

TABLE 3b: DICTIONARIES USED (OWNED AND BORROWED)

Stage I (Canterbury) Students

Dictionary type	Owned	Borrowed	Total used
<u>Monolingual</u>			
'large'	-	2	2
'medium'	21	2	23
'small'	1	-	1
'specialised'	-	1	1
Subtotal	22	5	27
<u>Bilingual</u>			
'large'	3	18	21
'medium'	5	-	5
'small'	14	-	14
'specialised'	-	3	3
Subtotal	22	21	43
TOTAL	44	26	70

TABLE 3c

Stage I (Otago) Students

Dictionary type	Owned	Borrowed	Total used
<u>Monolingual</u>			
'large'	-	1	1
'medium'	4	2	6
'small'	-	-	-
'specialised'	-	-	-
Subtotal	4	3	7
<u>Bilingual</u>			
'large'	11	3	14
'medium'	7	1	8
'small'	9	1	10
'specialised'	-	-	-
Subtotal	27	5	32
TOTAL	31	8	39

TABLE 3d: DICTIONARIES USED (OWNED AND BORROWED)

Stage II (Canterbury and Otago) Students

Dictionary type	Owned	Borrowed	Total used
<u>Monolingual</u>			
'large'	-	2	2
'medium'	10	3	13
'small'	-	-	-
'specialised'	-	1	1
Subtotal	10	6	16
<u>Bilingual</u>			
'large'	2	5	7
'medium'	7	-	7
'small'	9	2	11
'specialised'	-	-	-
Subtotal	18	7	25
TOTAL	28	13	41

TABLE 3e

Stage III & M.A. (Canterbury) Students

Dictionary type	Owned	Borrowed	Total used
<u>Monolingual</u>			
'large'	1	5	6
'medium'	9	1	10
'small'	-	-	-
'specialised'	-	1	1
Subtotal	10	7	17
<u>Bilingual</u>			
'large'	7	9	16
'medium'	5	-	5
'small'	3	1	4
'specialised'	1	-	1
Subtotal	16	10	26
TOTAL	26	17	43

ised), the 20 Otago Stage I students use 14 different dictionaries (11 bilingual, 3 monolingual), the 14 Stage II students use 19 different dictionaries (14 bilingual, 4 monolingual, 1 monolingual specialised), and the 10 Stage III and M.A. students use 19 different dictionaries (11 bilingual, 6 monolingual, 1 bilingual specialised, 1 monolingual specialised).

The seventh form respondents consult only one monolingual dictionary (the Petit Larousse), whereas among them the Stage III and M.A. students use six (Larousse Lexis, Petit Larousse, Robert Méthodique, Micro-Robert, Petit Robert and Grand Robert).

The following proportions of students variously used bilingual dictionaries only, or both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. No student used only monolingual dictionaries.

Table 4 : Dictionary use: monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

Level of students	Monolingual only N (%)	Bilingual only N (%)	Monolingual + bilingual N (%)
Seventh formers	- (-)	27 (77)	8 (23)
Stage I (C)	- (-)	2 (8)	22 (92)
Stage I (O)	- (-)	12 (60)	8 (40)
Stage II	- (-)	2 (14)	12 (86)
Stage III & M.A.	- (-)	1 (10)	9 (90)

The information in Tables 3a - e can also be summarised to give the following mean numbers of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries used by the student respondents.

Table 5 : Mean number of dictionaries used

Level of students	Type of dictionary	Dictionaries owned	Dictionaries borrowed	Total
Seventh formers	monolingual	-	.3	.3
	bilingual	.6	.9	1.5
	total	.6	1.2	1.8
Stage I Canty	monolingual	.9	.2	1.1
	bilingual	.9	.9	1.8
	total	1.8	1.1	2.9
Stage I Otago	monolingual	.2	.2	.4
	bilingual	1.4	.3	1.6
	total	1.6	.4	2.0
Stage II Canty & Otago	monolingual	.7	.4	1.1
	bilingual	1.3	.5	1.8
	total	2.0	.9	2.9
Stage III & M.A.	monolingual	1.0	.7	1.7
	bilingual	1.6	1.0	2.6
	total	2.6	1.7	4.3

These figures show that not all seventh-form students own a dictionary, some schools issuing them as school textbooks. Practically all the dictionaries used and certainly all those owned by the seventh-formers are bilingual.

Almost all the Stage I Canterbury students own a monolingual dictionary (the Robert Micro-Poche is a recommended text) and, in addition, almost all own a bilingual dictionary (usually pocket-sized). At Otago, on the other hand, where a bilingual dictionary is recommended, few students own a monolingual dictionary, and all own at least one bilingual dictionary (at least half own a 'large' bilingual dictionary). Interestingly, these Otago students do not appear to borrow monolingual dictionaries either, so the recommendation to purchase a bilingual dictionary means that few of these Otago students ever use a monolingual dictionary.

At Stage II level a lower proportion of students (than at Stage I level at Canterbury) own a monolingual dictionary,

although this figure is influenced by the Otago students who tend not to own them.

Finally Stage III and M.A. students own on average one monolingual dictionary each and at least one bilingual dictionary. They also borrow more dictionaries than students at lower levels.

Reasons for purchase of dictionaries.

Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix D summarise information provided by the students concerning the reasons for their purchase of a particular dictionary, and the year of study in which the dictionary had been bought. It is clear that the major reason for students' purchasing a particular dictionary is that their teacher had recommended it. However because Table 1 (Appendix D) amalgamates information related to monolingual and bilingual dictionaries it obscures the fact that all monolingual dictionaries purchased were purchased because a teacher had recommended them, whereas varying proportions of bilingual dictionaries had been bought for this reason, ranging from about 5% of those bought by Stage I (Canterbury) and Stage II students to 50% of those bought by Stage III and M.A. students (where half had been bought on school teachers' advice and half on the advice of a Stage III lecturer).

Students, like their teachers, rarely gave as a reason for the purchase of a dictionary the fact that it was monolingual or bilingual, although since all the former were bought on teachers' advice this is not perhaps surprising. Generally, however, students only buy monolingual dictionaries when their teachers recommend one, (and buy the one recommended because it has been ordered especially for them by university bookshops), whereas the choice of bilingual dictionaries is in many cases left up to the students themselves, who, perhaps naturally, tend to buy the cheaper, more portable type of dictionary.

The year of their French studies in which students bought their dictionaries is shown in Table 2 in Appendix D. Clearly university students tend to buy a dictionary when they reach university (either monolingual or bilingual) depending on the recommendations of their Stage I lecturers,

while retaining to varying extents the bilingual dictionaries they had acquired at school.

Frequency of dictionary consultation.

Students were asked to indicate how frequently they consulted each of the dictionaries they used. Details are given in Appendix D and generally show that students use the dictionaries they own more frequently than those they borrow. The table below shows how frequently the students use any dictionary (owned or borrowed, bilingual or monolingual).

Table 6 : Most frequent consultation of any dictionary

Level of students	At least 3-4 times/week	Weekly	Monthly
Seventh form	54%	43%	3%
Stage I (Canty)	42%	54%	4%
Stage I (Otago)	65%	35%	-
Stage II	57%	43%	-
Stage III & M.A.	70%	30%	-

To a large extent dictionary usage, i.e. its frequency, will depend on the tasks students use dictionaries for. If it is assumed that students use their dictionaries in the preparation of assignments, then usage for this purpose may be irregular. On the other hand, the use of dictionaries for comprehension may depend on the type of text being read at the time, and on a number of other factors including the extent to which the text contains its own glossary, or of course whether the student reads the text in French or English, or at all. For these reasons too much should not be read into the variations in the above figures. It is clear, however, that the vast majority of the students surveyed do use a dictionary at least weekly, for some purpose.

Students' 'favourite' dictionary.

The students were asked to indicate of all the dictionaries they used (owned or borrowed) which was their 'favourite'. The results are as follows (details are given in Appendix D).

Table 7 : Students' favourite dictionary

Level of students	Monolingual	Bilingual	No response
Seventh formers	3%	51%	46%
Stage I (Canty)	21%	67%	12%
Stage I (Otago)	5%	80%	15%
Stage II	21%	79%	-
Stage III & M.A.	20%	60%	20%

Among those that responded to this question there is an overwhelming preference for bilingual dictionaries, even among those who own monolingual dictionaries as well.

The purpose and frequency of dictionary consultation.

Students were asked to indicate which dictionary they usually consult to find a variety of listed types of information, and how often they consult any dictionary, if at all, for this purpose.

The results, contained in Tables 8a - e, show the percentage of the respondents who use a dictionary to obtain a given type of information, the mean frequency of use (for those who did use dictionaries for this purpose) and the ranking of these frequencies of use.

All the seventh form French students consult dictionaries for the meaning of a French word and for the English or French equivalents of French or English words. A high proportion of these students also consult dictionaries for grammatical information (e.g. à or de after a verb), for examples of the usage of a French word, for gender and spelling of French words and for idiomatic expressions involving French words. Dictionaries are rarely consulted for the register of French words or for the derivatives of French words. Only about one quarter of these seventh formers use a dictionary to find the pronunciation of a French word. One assumes that those who do so are familiar with the International Phonetic Alphabet. For those students who do use the dictionary for a given purpose, dictionaries are most frequently consulted for the meaning of a French word, and for equivalents (English/French and

TABLE 8a: PURPOSE AND FREQUENCY OF DICTIONARY CONSULTATION

Seventh form students

Purpose of consultation	% using dictionary	Mean frequency of use	Rank
Meaning of a French word	100	1.5	2
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	100	1.3	1
Grammatical information	88	2.2	7
Examples of usage	82	2.1	6
Synonyms / antonyms	65	2.6	9=
Gender	88	1.9	5
Pronunciation	24	2.6	9=
Spelling	94	1.8	3=
Idiomatic expressions	82	2.3	8
Verb conjugation	61	1.8	3=
Register	39	2.7	11
Derivatives	39	2.8	12

Note: Mean frequency of use was calculated using the following scale: 1 = frequently, 2 = sometimes, 3 = hardly ever. Students who responded using a fourth point on this scale, 4 = never, were omitted from the calculations.

TABLE 8b: PURPOSE AND FREQUENCY OF DICTIONARY CONSULTATION

Stage I (Canterbury) Students

Purpose of consultation	% using dictionary	Mean frequency of use	Rank
Meaning of a French word	100	1.5	2
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	100	1.3	1
Grammatical information	91	1.8	5=
Examples of usage	100	1.9	7
Synonyms / antonyms	91	2.1	9
Gender	95	1.7	4
Pronunciation	67	2.6	12
Spelling	100	1.6	3
Idiomatic expressions	91	1.8	5=
Verb conjugation	57	2.0	8
Register	62	2.4	11
Derivatives	33	2.3	10

Note: as for Table 8a.TABLE 8c

Stage I (Otago) Students

Purpose of consultation	% using dictionary	Mean frequency of use	Rank
Meaning of a French word	100	1.2	1
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	100	1.3	2
Grammatical information	95	1.8	3=
Examples of usage	100	1.8	3=
Synonyms / antonyms	83	2.5	8=
Gender	95	1.9	7
Pronunciation	79	2.5	8=
Spelling	100	1.8	3=
Idiomatic expressions	95	1.8	3=
Verb conjugation	63	2.5	8=
Register	84	2.7	11
Derivatives	74	2.8	12

Note: as for Table 8a.

TABLE 8d : PURPOSE AND FREQUENCY OF DICTIONARY CONSULTATION

Stage II (Canterbury and Otago) Students

Purpose of consultation	% using dictionary	Mean frequency of use	Rank
Meaning of a French word	100	1.2	2
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	100	1.1 } 1.2	1
Grammatical information	93	1.4	3
Examples of usage	93	1.6	4=
Synonyms / antonyms	93	2.3	9
Gender	100	1.6	4=
Pronunciation	50	3.0	11=
Spelling	100	1.9	6=
Idiomatic expressions	93	1.9	6=
Verb conjugation	79	2.1	8
Register	50	3.0	11=
Derivatives	43	2.7	10

Note: as for Table 8a.

TABLE 8e

Stage III & M.A. (Canterbury) Students

Purpose of consultation	% using dictionary	Mean frequency of use	Rank
Meaning of a French word	100	1.2	2
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	100	1.1 } 1.2	1
Grammatical information	89	1.5	3=
Examples of usage	100	1.5	3=
Synonyms / antonyms	78	2.1	8
Gender	100	1.5	3=
Pronunciation	78	2.7	11
Spelling	100	1.8	7
Idiomatic expressions	89	1.5	3=
Verb conjugation	67	2.2	9
Register	89	2.4	10
Derivatives	67	2.8	12

Note: as for Table 8a.

French/English), then for spelling and verb conjugation (about 40% of these students use sources other than a dictionary for the latter) and gender. Even for those who do consult them, it is rare for these students to seek information on synonyms or antonyms, pronunciation, register and derivatives.

The Canterbury Stage I students all consult a dictionary for the meaning of French words, for the English and French equivalents of French and English words, for examples of the usage of French words, and for the spelling of French words. Almost all of them also consult them for grammatical information, synonyms and antonyms of French words, for gender and for idiomatic expressions involving French words. However, dictionaries are most frequently used for equivalents, meaning of French words, spelling, gender and idiomatic expressions. They are rarely used for pronunciation, register and derivatives.

To a certain extent students use their dictionaries for various purposes according to how likely or easy they think it will be to find the information there. Evidently when a word appears in the nomenclature of the dictionary its spelling, gender, pronunciation and either equivalent(s) or meaning(s) will also appear. Other information which may or may not be given in dictionaries such as grammatical information, examples of usage, etc. is sought less frequently by students, either because they do not need it often or because they have found from experience that their dictionary lacks this type of information.

The Otago Stage I students show a similar pattern of usage to the Canterbury students, although more of them consult dictionaries for the register of French words and for their derivatives, albeit less frequently than the Canterbury Stage I students.

At Stage II, Stage III and M.A. level the same pattern is observed, dictionaries being consulted by more students and more frequently for the more basic types of information. However, by Stage III level almost 90% of the students are consulting a dictionary for information about register (and more frequently).

Type of dictionary (bilingual or monolingual) consulted for the above purposes.

The students in responding to the question about the dictionaries they used were asked to indicate which dictionary they usually consult, if any, for the purposes listed above. This information, classified simply according to whether a monolingual or a bilingual dictionary is usually consulted is given in Tables 9a - e.

At seventh form level, students, as might be expected from their responses to the question concerning the dictionaries they use, consult bilingual dictionaries for practically all purposes, even when it is a task for which they are generally quite unsuited e.g. synonyms and antonyms and derivatives. Many students at all levels from seventh form to M.A. did not distinguish between meaning and equivalents when they said they seek the former in bilingual dictionaries and the latter in monolingual dictionaries. As far as they are concerned there probably is no distinction.

The comparison between Stage I students at Canterbury and Otago (where monolingual and bilingual dictionaries are respectively recommended) is interesting. Generally, the Canterbury students who tend to own both a bilingual and a monolingual dictionary use the latter more for functions it is more likely to be able to fulfil e.g. synonyms and antonyms, and grammatical information (both of which are claimed to be a strong point of the Micro-Robert by its compilers). Almost a third of the Canterbury students use their monolingual dictionary for finding the meaning of a French word. Spelling, gender and pronunciation appear in both types of dictionary and students probably use whichever is handy for this purpose.

The Otago students, on the other hand, use bilingual dictionaries for almost every purpose; only for information about synonyms and antonyms, verb conjugation and derivatives do any (and it is still a small proportion compared with their fellows at Canterbury) use a monolingual dictionary.

Strangely, there is no real evidence of increasing use of monolingual dictionaries at Stage II, III and M.A. levels (at Otago in Stage II monolingual dictionaries are recommended

TABLE 9a : PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION AND TYPE OF DICTIONARY CONSULTED

Seventh form students

Purpose of consultation	Monolingual %	Bilingual %
Meaning of French word	-	100
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	3	97
Grammatical information	3	97
Examples of usage	-	100
Synonyms / antonyms	9	91
Gender	-	100
Pronunciation	-	100
Spelling	-	100
Idiomatic expressions	4	96
Verb conjugation	-	100
Register	8	92
Derivatives	15	85

TABLE 9b: PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION AND TYPE OF DICTIONARY CONSULTED

Stage I (Canterbury) Students

Purpose of consultation	Monolingual %	Bilingual %
Meaning of French word	30	70
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	17	83
Grammatical information	57	43
Examples of usage	43	57
Synonyms / antonyms	76	24
Gender	38	62
Pronunciation	40	60
Spelling	39	61
Idiomatic expressions	40	60
Verb conjugation	71	29
Register	43	57
Derivatives	29	71

TABLE 9c

Stage I (Otago) Students

Purpose of consultation	Monolingual %	Bilingual %
Meaning of French word	5	95
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	-	100
Grammatical information	6	94
Examples of usage	5	95
Synonyms / antonyms	19	81
Gender	-	100
Pronunciation	-	100
Spelling	6	100
Idiomatic expressions	6	94
Verb conjugation	17	83
Register	6	94
Derivatives	13	87

TABLE 9d: PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION AND TYPE OF DICTIONARY CONSULTED

Stage II (Canterbury and Otago) Students

Purpose of consultation	Monolingual %	Bilingual %
Meaning of French word	21	79
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	-	100
Grammatical information	31	69
Examples of usage	62	38
Synonyms / antonyms	92	8
Gender	7	93
Pronunciation	29	71
Spelling	14	86
Idiomatic expression	54	46
Verb conjugation	45	55
Register	43	57
Derivatives	-	100

TABLE 9e

Stage III & M.A. (Canterbury) Students

Purpose of consultation	Monolingual %	Bilingual %
Meaning of French word	30	70
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	-	100
Grammatical information	25	75
Examples of usage	30	70
Synonyms / antonyms	100	-
Gender	30	70
Pronunciation	43	57
Spelling	45	55
Idiomatic expression	25	75
Verb conjugation	33	67
Register	25	75
Derivatives	50	50

Table 10: Dictionary usually consulted for comprehension

Level of students	Bilingual %	Monolingual %	Satisfaction?			Difficulty with monolingual?			
			Yes	Some	No	N.A.	Yes	Some	No
7th Formers	97	3	94	3	3	63	8	20	8
Stage I (Cant'y)	75	25	75	25	-	13	46	21	21
Stage I (Otago)	95	5	90	10	-	55	15	30	-
Stage II	93	7	100	-	-	14	36	36	14
Stage III & M.A.	80	20	90	10	-	10	-	60	30

as well as bilingual dictionaries). On the contrary, it appears that students make increasing use of bilingual dictionaries. This may be due to the fact that they are now using the larger, more recent bilingual dictionaries (e.g. Harrap's New Shorter and the Collins Robert), which do have extensive grammatical information and many more examples of usage and idiomatic expressions than does the monolingual dictionary owned by most Canterbury students.

Dictionary use for comprehension and production.

Students were asked to think a little about the processes involved in using a dictionary to comprehend written or spoken French or to produce it. When students are reading a French text and they come across a word they do not understand and they decide to look it up in a dictionary do they usually consult a bilingual or a monolingual dictionary? In responding to this question the students were also asked whether dictionary consultation for the purpose of comprehension is usually 'successful' i.e. whether they usually find the word or expression they are looking for and understand its meaning. Finally they were asked if they use a monolingual dictionary for this purpose whether they ever have trouble understanding the definitions.

The responses to these questions concerning the use of dictionaries for the purposes of comprehension of French are summarised in Table 10 (opposite).

More than 90% of seventh form, Stage I (Otago) and Stage II students use bilingual dictionaries for the purpose of comprehension. They are invariably successful, at least in their opinion. A quarter of Stage I (Canterbury) students and a fifth of Stage III and M.A. students usually consult a monolingual dictionary for comprehension. This, at least for the Stage I students, is less successful, due as the data in Table 10 suggest to the difficulty that students may experience in understanding the definitions. The students who normally use monolingual dictionaries for this purpose commented as follows in responding to the question of whether they usually find the word they are seeking and understand its meaning: "Yes, sometimes after looking up several words [in the definition]", or "I usually find the word but don't

Table 11 : Dictionary usually consulted for production

Level of students	Bilingual %	Monolingual %	Check in monolingual?			
			Yes %	Sometimes %	No %	N.A. %
7th Formers	100	-	23	6	71	-
Stage I (Canty)	96	4	54	13	29	4
Stage I (Otago)	100	-	5	10	85	-
Stage II	100	-	36	36	29	-
Stage III & M.A.	90	10	40	20	30	10

usually understand all the French explanation of meaning", and "It normally requires further research to get the expression and its meaning." The students who normally use a monolingual dictionary for comprehension all admitted to some difficulty with understanding definitions. Other students who also reported difficulty apparently solve that particular problem by normally consulting a bilingual dictionary for comprehension purposes.

For the production of French, students almost without exception normally use a bilingual dictionary as Table 11, opposite, shows. However, apart from seventh form students and Otago Stage I students (who do not commonly own monolingual dictionaries) a fairly consistent 70% of students do, at least sometimes, check the use of a word in a monolingual dictionary. Some students who use bilingual dictionaries reported that they sometimes check words in the reverse (French-English) part of their dictionaries.

Students were asked for which use (comprehending French or producing it) they considered their dictionary(ies) was more useful and why. As with their teachers' responses to a similar question, it is obvious that many students found the question (understandably) confusing.

The reasons given by students for believing that dictionaries were more useful for one function than the other are illustrated by the comments below.

- favour production:

A number of students thought that dictionaries were better for the production of French, because the context of the work can usually help in comprehension: "comprehending is largely common sense", "I find it more useful to attempt to make an intelligent guess at a word in comprehension" (seventh formers), "if producing English (i.e. comprehending French) guess-work can usually help more", "when comprehending you've always got the context to help" (Stage I Canterbury), are typical comments. Other reasons for favouring dictionaries for production were: "so I can spell the words right", "I find other idioms to help make the passage more interesting", "to get correct spelling and usage", "if you don't know how to translate something from

Table 12 : For what purpose do students mainly use the dictionary?

Level of students	Comprehension %	Production %	Both about the same %
7th Formers	3	35	62
Stage I (Canty)	4	29	67
Stage I (Otago)	40	5	55
Stage II	14	29	57
Stage III & M.A.	10	30	60

Table 13 : Dictionary reference skills

Level of students	Instruction in dictionary use				Introduction read			Abbreviations known		
	No %	Yes			Yes	Partly	No	Yes	Some	No
		3/4/5 form	6th/7th form	Univ.						
7th Formers	74	14	11	N/A	29	-	71	77	14	9
Stage I (Canty)	46	8	13	33	13	17	71	63	33	4
Stage I (Otago)	65	10	10	15	30	30	40	60	35	5
Stage II	79	7	-	14	36	14	50	64	36	-
Stage III & M.A.	30	-	-	70	40	10	50	100	-	-

English to French a dictionary is very necessary for straight vocab. if not for grammar points", "I need more help for producing since you have to create your own context", "because you have to have the exact meaning whereas with comprehending often a synonym will do", "because correctness is more essential", "because a good dictionary such as Collins Robert makes for more accuracy with regard to idiom, etc."

- favour comprehension:

Fewer students thought that their dictionaries were more useful for comprehension. Those who did commented as follows: "... because one word may alter the whole meaning of a passage", "easily understood, and quickly", "because for comprehending you don't need to worry about grammar, etc.", "because the dictionary doesn't seem to contain quite the usage required for producing French", "because in producing French my main need at present is grammatical rules - dictionaries don't really provide these", etc.

Whatever the students believe about which function dictionaries are more useful for, Table 12 opposite shows what they mainly use their dictionaries for. It is apparent that apart from the Stage I Otago students, other students use their dictionaries less often for comprehension.

Dictionary reference skills.

As was pointed out in the Introduction the likelihood of 'successful' dictionary use is dependent on the consultant's reference skills. It is difficult to obtain any really meaningful information on this subject, unless the students could be tested, and since they use such a variety of dictionaries this would be difficult. To give some idea of how familiar students were with the dictionaries they used, they were asked first, whether they had received any instruction from teachers on the use of dictionaries, and if so, by whom and when, second, whether or not they had read the introduction(s) to the dictionary(ies) they use, and third, whether they were familiar with the system of abbreviations used in their dictionary(ies).

The results are summarised in Table 13, opposite.

Table 14 : Summary table

Dictionary use: all university students

Comprehension: dictionary usually consulted

Bilingual %	Monolingual %	Satisfaction?			Difficulty with monolingual?			
		Yes	Some	No	N.A.	Yes	Sometimes	No
87	13	87	12	1	25	28	32	15

Production: dictionary usually consulted

Bilingual %	Monolingual %	Check in monolingual?			
		Yes	Sometimes	No	N.A.
97	3	34	18	50	3

Dictionaries mainly used for which purpose

Comprehension %	Production %	Both about the same %
18	22	60

A high proportion of students at all levels except Stage III and M.A. claimed that they had not received any instructions on dictionary usage. This fits with the information provided by teachers. Varying proportions of students claimed they had read the introduction of at least one of the dictionaries they use, while a further proportion said they had read it partially. A higher proportion of students claimed they were familiar with the system of abbreviations used in their dictionaries, although quite a large proportion admitted that they were only familiar with the more common ones, or at least the ones they needed to know.

Summary and discussion.

All the students surveyed use dictionaries in their French studies. Varying proportions ranging from a high of 77% of seventh formers to a low of 8% of Canterbury Stage I students use only bilingual dictionaries, while use of both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries ranged from 23% of seventh formers to 92% of Canterbury Stage I students. None of the students used only a monolingual dictionary.

Students, at least at university level, tend to buy the dictionary recommended by their teachers. Where a monolingual dictionary is recommended students buy it for this reason and also use a bilingual dictionary. Where a bilingual dictionary is recommended few students either own or use a monolingual dictionary.

Seventh form students who almost without exception use bilingual dictionaries for all purposes, and generally show themselves to differ only in degree from the more advanced students, will be excluded from the remainder of the summary. The university students (68 in total) own on average .7 monolingual and 1.2 bilingual dictionaries and 98% of them use a dictionary at least weekly. As summary Table 14 opposite shows, 18% use their dictionaries more for comprehension, 22% use them more for production and the remaining 60% equally for both purposes. For comprehension, the students show a strong preference for the use of bilingual dictionaries (87% used one for this purpose), and were generally satisfied with their use. Only those using monolingual

Table 15 : Summary table

Dictionary use - all university students

Purpose of consultation	% using dictionary	Mean frequency of use	Rank
Meaning of French word	100	1.3	2
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	100	1.2	1
Grammatical information	92	1.7	3=
Examples of usage	98	1.8	5=
Synonyms / antonyms	87	2.3	9
Gender	97	1.7	3=
Pronunciation	68	2.7	11=
Spelling	100	1.8	5=
Idiomatic expressions	92	1.8	5=
Verb conjugation	65	2.2	8
Register	70	2.6	10
Derivatives	52	2.7	11=

Note: Mean frequency of use was calculated using the following scale: 1 = frequently, 2 = sometimes, 3 = hardly ever. Students who responded using a fourth point on this scale, 4 = never, were omitted from the calculations.

Type of dictionary used - all university students

Purpose of consultation	Monolingual %	Bilingual %
Meaning of a French word	21	79
Equivalents (Fr/Eng or Eng/Fr)	6	94
Grammatical information	32	68
Examples of usage	34	66
Synonyms / antonyms	66	34
Gender	19	81
Pronunciation	25	75
Spelling	23	77
Idiomatic expressions	31	69
Verb conjugation	44	56
Register	29	71
Derivatives	21	79

dictionaries for comprehension expressed any real dissatisfaction. For production, students overwhelmingly prefer bilingual dictionaries (97% of them), at least as a starting point. However, about 50% of the students do, at least sometimes, check the information in a monolingual dictionary.

All students seek information in the dictionary on the meanings of French words, on equivalents, and on spelling (see summary Table 15 opposite). A very high proportion also seek grammatical information, examples of usage, idiomatic expressions, gender, and synonyms or antonyms of French words. Lower proportions of students seek information on pronunciation, verb conjugation, register and the derivatives of French words. Dictionaries are most frequently consulted for information on meaning and equivalents, grammatical information, gender, spelling, idiomatic expressions and examples of usage. For these purposes students use bilingual dictionaries predominately, although between 20% and 35% use monolingual dictionaries.

Slightly under half of the students have received some instruction on the use of dictionaries, usually at university, and the same proportion have read at least part of the introduction(s) to their dictionary(ies). A very high proportion claimed to be familiar with at least the common abbreviations in their dictionaries. Without saying so explicitly, many students in their verbal responses to the questions concerning reference skills appeared embarrassed to admit their lack of knowledge. That, of course, is the problem with self-reported information which is not subject to independent verification - it tends to present an idealised situation. Teachers who mark students' work see the reality of dictionary consultation, and clearly believe that all is not well.

The students in the present study differ most obviously from those described in the studies summarised in the Introduction, in their use of monolingual dictionaries which is much lower than for the other student groups. However, since New Zealand students can only buy monolingual dictionaries when their teachers recommend and specially order them, this lower usage is largely due to teachers recommending bilingual dictionaries. The students' preference for bilingual

dictionaries agrees with the findings of at least three of the four previous studies, and although they were not asked which type of dictionary they were more satisfied with there does seem to be a clear preference for bilingual dictionaries. The students consult dictionaries most often for the same types of information as the other student groups, and most frequently for the meaning of French words and for equivalents. The students appear equally 'unsophisticated' in their dictionary use, in that they too rarely seek information on register and members of the same 'word family'. Finally, the fact that so many students persist in the use of small bilingual dictionaries, even for production, suggests a certain lack of awareness on their part of the wealth of information (examples of usage, grammatical information, indications of language level, etc.) which is available in the better and more recent monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

The students' responses to the questionnaire present a generalised view of their dictionary usage, at one stage removed from reality. In the next chapter, a closer look will be taken at students' use of dictionaries in relation to specific tasks.

CHAPTER 4

STUDENT DICTIONARY USE FOR SPECIFIC TASKSIntroduction.

In Chapter 3 students reported on their dictionary usage and preferences. Generally, bilingual dictionaries are favoured for both the comprehension and the production of French. Students seemed to be satisfied with their dictionaries, at least for comprehension, although less satisfied with their monolingual dictionaries than their bilingual ones for this purpose. They also claimed a reasonable familiarity with the introductions and system of abbreviations used in their dictionaries. The information presented in Chapter 3 concerns what the students said they do with their dictionaries. What the present chapter will try to illustrate is what some students actually do.

Two examples of the actual behaviour of students vis-à-vis their dictionaries are presented. The first of these involves some Canterbury Stage I students who in the course of preparing one of their regular assignments were asked to give detailed information on their dictionary usage and its success. In the second exercise four Canterbury Stage I students were asked, while translating from and into French, to think aloud, and to describe their procedure for consulting a dictionary - what word(s) they were seeking, what they found in the entry, what decision they made as a result. Details of these two exercises are presented below.

Dictionary use exercise.

Students in the Stage I Canterbury language class were asked to complete a questionnaire while they were preparing an assignment which involved comprehension of a written

French text for comprehension assignment

LES NOUVEAUX BRUITS QUI COURENT

De A comme Autoradio à Z

comme Zizique, ce qui a changé dans les rumeurs
de la ville et les cris de la rue.

Succès du moment : sirène de police, alarme détraquée,
guitariste du métro, moto stéréo. Valeurs
d'avenir : le bruissement insidieux de l'âge électronique.

Et le silence, bordel ?

Des fruits ? Des nouveaux fruits ? En cette saison ? » Non, Tryphon ! Bougre d'ectoplasme ! Je parle des nouveaux bruits de Paris. « Ah, les nuits de Paris ! » La nuit, justement, espèce de zouave. Par exemple la Sirène de Magasin (*Sirena terribilis*). On ne saura jamais pourquoi cet oiseau des Carpates s'éveille en pleine nuit. Son cri est le ouaouanement. La Sirène de Magasin ouaouane parfois jusqu'à 9 heures, quand, parvenu sur les lieux, le commerçant la rendort à coups de latte. Dans l'intervalle, *Sirena terribilis* a réveillé tout le monde sauf le commerçant, qui habite Le Vésinet et promène son visage frais parmi les gueules de lait tourné du quartier.

Comparée à d'autres classiques du bruit nocturne (Bouteille dans vide-ordures ou Moto traversant Paris plein pot, deux cent mille personnes réveillées, on a fait le calcul), l'alarme en dérangement a le même atout que Chien lâissé tout seul ou les Trois Glorieuses du ouiquende (perceuse-tronçonneuse-tondeuse) : la durée.

Arrêtez, les mecs. Please. Cessez de mettre des serrures à trompette sur vos portes à tambour. Ou alors que ça marche. Là, ça dérange tout le monde mais personne se dérange. Si les flics devaient s'occuper de toutes les détraquées...

Pour que les flics se déplacent, il faudrait déjà qu'ils entendent. Que le ouaoua des sirènes ne fût point recouvert par le ouinouin des nouvelles patrouilleuses à double gyrophare en forme de guirlande de Noël. Est-elle fière, la police, de ses nouvelles caisses son et lumière ! D'abord c'est américain. Ensuite ça stridule. Ça vous démarque de l'ambulance qui tadidanne et du pompier qui pimponne, sans parler du petit rigolo à klaxon musical qui toudoudoudidoune. Toute faune bien connue des ceusses qui habitent le fameux Triangle des Hôpitaux (Broussais - Saint-Vincent-de-Paul - Necker). Le Triangle des Hôpitaux est un Triangle des Bermudes : on n'y retrouve jamais un sommeil perdu.

Revenons aux nouvelles voitures de flics. La

classe. Il faut voir le jeune flic sauter du véhicule, moteur et radio en marche, et s'engouffrer dans le lardu. « Ça c'est le progrès, monsieur, dit un commissaire. Ce n'est pas comme ce matériel que nous impose l'administration. » D'un menton humilié, il désigne le préau avec sa batterie de nouveaux vélos réglementaires visant à intervenir avec souplesse et célérité au long des voies publiques. En rencontrez-vous souvent, des escouades en vélocipède ? Elles doivent raser les murs. La nouvelle patrouilleuse, en revanche. C'est comme là-bas, dis. Dans les films américains.

LA REVANCHE DE L'OREILLE

Dans les films américains, pour surprendre discrètement un gangster, on voit toujours converger quinze voitures, sirènes déployées. Résultat : massacre. Ça m'a longtemps paru bizarre, comme stratégie. Maintenant, j'ai compris. Le bruit moderne n'est qu'accessoirement utile. Il n'avertit pas, il investit. C'est d'abord une affiche. Moi Tarzan. « Lorsque j'étais étudiant, racontait Michel Crépeau, alors ministre des Environs, le grand chic était d'avoir la moto qui faisait moins de bruit que celle des copains. » (1) Le bruit est devenu mode. Désormais, il y a un Monsieur Bruit dans chaque préfecture. Quand on donne du Monsieur à quelque chose, c'est que cette chose est devenue quelqu'un.

... etc.

Extract from Le Nouvel Observateur, 3 février, 1984.

The words underlined are those that at least one student consulted the dictionary for their meaning or equivalent.

French text. This text had been extracted from Le Nouvel Observateur and contained (as the extract in Fig. 2 opposite shows) some quite difficult vocabulary. The students' responses to the comprehension questions were to be written in French. They were asked to record for five instances when they consulted a dictionary for the purposes of comprehending the text and five instances when they consulted one to write their answers, the following information:

- (a) the purpose of the consultation (e.g. find meaning of a French word, French equivalent of an English word, check gender, spelling, verb form, etc.).
- (b) which dictionary they consulted (first).
- (c) whether they were successful in finding what they were looking for (success? - yes, some, no).
- (d) if not (completely) successful, what they did next (e.g. gave up, checked another dictionary ...)
- (e) which dictionary, if any, they consulted next.
- (f) whether they were successful with the second dictionary consulted (success? - yes, some, no).
- (g) the result of their consultation(s) (i.e. meaning of word, French equivalent, spelling, etc.).

25 students completed the questionnaire and handed it in with their assignment (these were not necessarily the same students who completed the questionnaire analysed in the last chapter, but many of them no doubt were).

The analysis of responses to the questionnaire concerns dictionary consultation for comprehension and production.

Dictionary consultation for comprehension.

The students sought the meanings or English equivalents of French words or expressions on 121 occasions (55 different words or expressions were involved, the majority of which (71%) were nouns). For comprehension purposes, 87 of the 121 consultations were initially made in a bilingual dictionary (72%) and 34 in a monolingual dictionary (28%). These are very similar to the proportions of Canterbury Stage I respondents who in Chapter 3 were shown to consult bilingual dictionaries in preference to monolingual ones for comprehension: 75% v. 25%. (however the percentages here refer to the proportions of consultations while those in Chapter 3 refer

to the proportions of consultants, although in the present exercise it was observed that most students consistently used either a bilingual or a monolingual initially for comprehension purposes, so the figures are probably comparable).

How successful were students with their initial consultation of a dictionary? The table below summarises their responses.

Table 16 : Success of initial dictionary consultation for comprehension

Dictionary consulted	Success?			Total N (%)
	Yes N (%)	Some N (%)	No N (%)	
bilingual	45 (52)	12 (14)	30 (34)	87 (100)
monolingual	23 (68)	6 (17)	5 (15)	34 (100)
Total	68 (56)	18 (15)	35 (29)	121 (100)

Note: N = number of consultations, not the number of students.

These results show that in this instance, at least, consultation of a bilingual dictionary generally proved less successful than that of a monolingual dictionary. Analysis of the words (or more rarely expressions) which caused students to report that their dictionary consultation had been unsuccessful (responses 'some' and 'no' above) shows that they fell into three main categories: first, there were words coined by the author of the article and which, just by coincidence probably, were only sought in bilingual dictionaries (e.g. ouiquende, tadidanner, pimponner, etc.); second, there were slang words (e.g. esgourde, bougre, mec, ceusse) which did not appear in the pocket bilingual dictionaries consulted, or even, in one case (le lardu) in a recent, large bilingual dictionary; third, there were words which did appear in the nomenclature of the dictionary consulted but not with the appropriate meaning (e.g. bordel in Et le silence, bordel?). One word which caused problems for both monolingual and bilingual dictionary consultants was striduler, for the former because it did not appear in the nomenclature (this word accounted for 3 of the 5 'no success' instances for the monolingual dictionary the Micro-Robert)

and for the latter because, even when it appeared, the students did not know what its English equivalent, 'stridulate' meant. One case where the monolingual dictionary proved more helpful was with the word "zouave" (which 9 students looked up). The bilingual dictionary, when the word appeared in it, simply gave its English equivalent 'zouave', while the monolingual dictionary actually explained the word (although to be fair, the explanation would not have added much to the students' understanding of the passage).

What did students do when they were unsuccessful with the first dictionary consulted? Generally, they consulted another. Even among 'successful' dictionary consultations, there was a small proportion of words which students checked in another dictionary, usually a monolingual one if a bilingual one had been consulted initially, and vice versa.

Those dictionary consultations (12) which were reported as having had 'some' success had the following consequences: in one case the student gave up, in three cases the word was checked in another bilingual dictionary (twice successfully), and in eight cases the words were checked in a monolingual dictionary (six times successfully, including in 2 cases the word 'stridulate' whose meaning was sought in a monolingual English dictionary, and twice unsuccessfully). Those who initially had 'some' success with a monolingual dictionary all then turned to a bilingual dictionary (4 times successfully, twice partially so).

Those consultations which had initially been completely unsuccessful in a bilingual dictionary (30) were, in most cases, followed up in a monolingual dictionary (26 in total, 17 successful, 2 partially so, 7 still unsuccessful). In the remaining four cases, other bilingual dictionaries were consulted (3 times successfully, including 1 case where a student consulted a Greek-English lexicon for the word "gyrophare", and once partially successful). Similarly, those words initially checked in a monolingual dictionary without any success, were all then checked in a bilingual dictionary (3 times successfully, once partially so (that word 'stridulate' again) and once not successfully).

The most obvious result from this part of the exercise is that students appear to have been remarkably persistent

in tracking down the meanings of unknown words. However, in this case where an assignment was involved the students no doubt had an added incentive to pursue the meanings of unknown words. One suspects that if they were simply reading they would be more inclined to 'give up' if they could not find the word or understand its meaning in the first dictionary consulted (and probably, rightly so).

Dictionary consultation for production.

Dictionaries were consulted, initially, 90 times for the purposes of production (not all students cited 5 instances). 66 times (73%) a bilingual dictionary was consulted and the remaining 24 times (27%) a monolingual dictionary was consulted. It is probably only a co-incidence that these proportions parallel those for comprehension (since it is a question of proportions of consultations, and not the proportions of students consulting ...), but it is clear that those who used a monolingual dictionary (mainly) for comprehension also tended to use it for production. Certainly, when it is simply a question of checking gender or spelling, any dictionary handy will do. Further, since monolingual dictionaries do not contain equivalents, this suggests that those who used them for production either had a wider French vocabulary or, of course, a more limited imagination.

Bilingual dictionaries were consulted initially 66 times for the following purposes and with varying degrees of success. (See Table 17 on next page.)

In this particular instance, the students reported greater initial success with their bilingual dictionaries for production purposes than they did for comprehension (viz. 76% of consultations for production were successful compared with 52% for comprehension). However, this may be a function of the comprehension passage itself, in that it contained a number of slang and coined words which could not be found in the dictionaries consulted. On the other hand when students were writing their answers they were not, one assumes, intending to use, and therefore seek equivalents of, slang English words or made-up words.

Table 17 : Success of bilingual dictionary consultation for
production

Purpose of consultation	Success?			Total N (%)
	Yes N (%)	Some N (%)	No N (%)	
Equivalent of English word	38	12	4	54 (82)
Spelling of French word	5	-	-	5 (8)
Verb form	1	-	-	1 (1)
Gender of French word	3	-	-	3 (5)
Grammatical information	2	-	-	2 (3)
Check meaning of French word	1	-	-	1 (1)
Total consultations	50 (76)	12 (18)	4 (6)	66 (100)

Not unexpectedly perhaps, the majority of dictionary consultations for production purposes were for the French equivalents of English words and expressions, and it was for this that students were often forced to check further. Evidently, when it is a question of checking spelling or gender, for example, dictionary consultation is more likely to prove 'successful' as long as the word appears in the nomenclature.

Even among those who reported 'success' with their initial consultation of a bilingual dictionary for the French equivalent of an English word, some still checked what they had found (2 words were checked in a bilingual dictionary, in one case in the French-English part of the same dictionary, 6 words were checked in a monolingual dictionary; all these consultations were successful). Of these initial consultations (12) which were reported as being partially successful ('some' success), four times the 'possible' equivalents were further checked in a bilingual dictionary (in the French-English part of the same dictionary in 3 cases) and eight times, the possibilities were checked in a monolingual dictionary. All these second 'refining' consultations were reported as being successful. Finally, for the four cases where initial consultation of a bilingual dictionary was totally unsuccessful, three times the equivalent was sought in a larger bilingual dictionary (successfully) and once, unsuccessfully, in a monolingual

dictionary.

A monolingual dictionary was consulted 24 times initially for production, as follows:

Table 18 : Success of monolingual dictionary consultation for production

Purpose of consultation	Success?			Total N (%)
	Yes N (%)	Some N (%)	No N (%)	
Gender of French word	8	-	-	8 (33)
Check meaning/existence of French word	5	-	-	5 (21)
Spelling of French word	4	-	-	4 (17)
Grammatical information	3	-	-	3 (13)
Equivalent of English word*	2	-	-	3 (13)
Synonyms	-	2	-	2 (8)
Total consultations	21 (88)	2 (8)	1 (4)	24 (100)

Note: *The two English words for which students sought equivalents in a monolingual dictionary were both very similar in English and French.

As with bilingual dictionary consultation for the purposes of production, monolingual dictionary consultation seems to have been more successful than it was for comprehension. However, in this case, there is a wide difference in the purpose of consultation i.e. for comprehension, all consultations were for the meaning of unknown French words, with variable success, whereas for production the students were 'checking' in the dictionary the spelling, gender, existence etc. of 'known' French words. In only two cases was the initial consultation of the monolingual dictionary reported as being less than completely successful; in both cases the synonyms suggested (it was the synonyms of known French words which were being sought) were further checked, successfully, in one case in a bilingual dictionary, in the other case in the same monolingual dictionary.

Practically all the above dictionary consultations whether for comprehension or production, whether in a

bilingual or a monolingual dictionary or both, were eventually reported by the students as being 'successful' - in their eyes. It is difficult from their reports of the results of their dictionary consultations to be certain always whether they were in fact 'successful'. In some cases, it is clear that they were not. Suffice it to say that in this assignment, where all students had free access to dictionaries for both comprehending the passage and for producing their answers (although some may not have availed themselves of the opportunity to do so) that the usual spread of marks was awarded, and some answers clearly showed that the students concerned had failed to comprehend the passage. That is, free access to dictionaries does not necessarily benefit all students equally. As Bensoussan has concluded, dictionaries do not really 'give' the meaning of a word. Consultants have to "negotiate that for themselves according to the context."²⁰ Further evidence as to the truth of this statement is shown in the next exercise.

Dictionary use: recorded protocols.

As Cohen²¹ has pointed out, as researchers have become more interested in the strategies used in learning a second or foreign language, they have sought different ways of seeking information about them. There has been increased interest in reports of the learner's own intuitions and insights, and, in particular, in verbal reports (or recorded protocols) in which the learner is asked, essentially, to think aloud while he is carrying out a specific task. There are some limitations to these learners' reports; they are, obviously, limited to those strategies that the learner is conscious of. Even reports such as those described in Chapter 3, which ostensibly are the students' own views of what they do are in effect generalised statements about their behaviour based on their beliefs about what they do, and do not in any case, relate to a specific event. On the other hand, verbal reports can be criticised as being reports

20. Bensoussan, M., Dictionaries and tests of EFL reading comprehension, ELT Journal, 37(4), p.345, 1983.

21. Cohen, A., Studying Second-Language Learning Strategies: How Do We Get the Information?, Applied Linguistics, 5(2), 101-12, 1984.

merely of the product of some kind of mental act rather than a description of the mental act or process itself.

The recorded protocol does have its own inherent difficulties as Cowan²² has concluded from his use of this technique to get students to describe their problem-solving strategies. Some of these difficulties are as follows: "The recording of a protocol calls for the performance of a task which is unfamiliar and unusual for the subject", which often leads to embarrassment or awkwardness. Second, even as "the commentary is being narrated, the subject is conscious of continuing to think about the problem. But he is required to operate rather like an interpreter producing a simultaneous translation; one part of his brain operates at a time-lag from the remainder, which must be over-attentive and moving forward." There is a skill involved which Cowan describes as "schizophrenic" and which, he says, requires "careful and patient nurturing". Third, it is always "very difficult to obtain an accurate record of what is going on in the problem solver's mind." There is a tendency, Cowan says, to leap steps, to draw conclusions without being quite sure why. Cowan has, as a result of his experiences, recommended a number of improvements to the use of recorded protocols, the most important of which is the necessity for a "relatively long 'training period'." (The students in the present exercise had a two minute introduction explaining what was required of them, and a 30 second demonstration of the process!)

Van Parreren has described the use of recorded protocols for discovering the strategies involved in contextual guessing in reading foreign language texts.²³ Because of the interesting conclusions he drew from his investigation (summarised in Chapter 1), and their apparent similarity to what one could logically expect to be involved in dictionary consultation for the purpose of comprehension, it was hoped to be able to parallel his study but focus attention on dictionary use for comprehension. It seems now that his

22. Cowan, J., Improving the Recorded Protocol, PLET Journal, 17(3), 160-63, 1980.

23. Van Parreren, op. cit.

students must obviously have been more skilled at verbalising their thought processes than the students who participated in the present study. Whether this is because dictionary use is harder to describe (although this is doubtful) or whether it is because the students involved in the present exercise were not sufficiently skilled (or trained) to report exactly what they were doing, the evidence available from the following recorded protocols concerning the process of dictionary consultation is limited. Despite this, the recorded protocols (which are shown in their entirety in Appendix E) do give an interesting picture of the way some students translate and use dictionaries.

The four students who participated in the recorded protocol exercise (Stage I Canterbury students) represented different ability levels according to their lecturer. The two males (S1 and S2 in the transcripts and discussion) were among the very best students in the class. Of the two females (S3 and S4), S3 was well above average and S4 quite mediocre. The students were asked to bring the dictionaries they normally used. This did not happen in all cases: S1 used the Micro-Robert and Collins Robert French Dictionary in the exercise (he did not normally use the latter); S2 used the Micro-Robert and Collins Gem dictionaries (these were his normal dictionaries); S3 usually consulted the Harrap's Standard dictionaries, she said, and did not own a monolingual dictionary, but on this occasion she used the Collins Robert French Dictionary; S4, who also did not own a monolingual dictionary, brought along and used her 1940 edition of Harrap's Shorter dictionary.

The two pairs of students (S1 and S2, S3 and S4) were asked to take turns at translating aloud two passages, one from French to English, the other from English to French. They were told that the interviewer was not interested in their translations per se but in the words they could not understand and sought in a dictionary. They were asked to look up any word they could not understand, to say exactly what word they were looking up, in which dictionary, what they found in the dictionary, and what they concluded. They were not, perhaps unfortunately in retrospect, asked to say how they arrived at their conclusions.

Figure 3

Text: French to English translation

Cadeaux: New York, New York

1 On s'imagine moderne, à la page, suréquipé de gadgets,
vacciné contre les enthousiasmes technologiques. On va faire un
tour sur la Cinquième Avenue. Vlan! Le choc. "Saturday Night
Fever", "Singin' in the Rain", "Grease", le "Muppet Show" ...
5 Tous les trésors de la Metro Goldwyn Mayer et de la Paramount, et
tant d'autres, films, dessins animés, programmes éducatifs, tout
cela étalé, bazaré en vrac à vingt-cinq dollars pièce - et ce
n'est qu'un début : les prix ne peuvent que dégringoler. Des
disques de trente centimètres, qui n'ont l'air de rien sous leurs
10 pochettes conventionnelles et qui sont en réalité des disques
vidéo - images, mouvements, couleurs et son stéréo - emboutis à la
chaîne comme de vulgaires microsillons par une matrice-moule à
gaufres.

Pour en jouir sur son téléviseur, il suffit d'acheter le
15 vidéo-tourne-disque correspondant - le modèle R.C.A. ou, mieux,
le système à rayon laser de Pioneer ou Toshiba. Beaucoup moins
cher qu'un magnétoscope, très supérieur en qualité visuelle et
sonore, inusable, éternel : les sillons du vidéodisque, qu'aucun
saphir ne labourera jamais puisque la lecture est assurée par un
20 pinceau lumineux immatériel, sont au cinéma, ce que le bronze est
à la sculpture - une garantie d'éternité. Voilà donc que des
centaines de milliers de foyers américains entreprennent de con-
stituer d'étonnants cinémathèques où les chefs d'oeuvre, jusqu'ici
tellement volatils, du son, de l'image et de la couleur, conserve-
25 ront leur fraîcheur intacte pour des siècles et des siècles ...
Et moi qui n'ai même pas encore acheté de magnétoscope! Je me
retrouve avec deux révolutions de retard. Ou trois, ou quatre ...
Hammacher Schlemmer, invraisemblable magasin de la 57^e Rue, ne
propose-t-il pas sur son catalogue des téléviseurs à trois écrans
30 - pour suivre trois programmes à la fois - et une antenne
parabolique à huit mille cinq cents dollars, pour capter directe-
ment les émissions par satellite ?

J'entre chez Bloomingdale's, les Galeries Lafayette de la
Troisième Avenue et je décide aussitôt de me considérer pour ce
35 que je suis : un homme préhistorique. Au rayon Télévision, on
vend couramment des appareils qui n'ont rien à voir avec nos
étranges lucarnes. Ces engins, munis de trois objectifs, pour
chacune des couleurs fondamentales, projettent, aussi grande que
vous les voulez, avec pour seule limite le recul disponible dans
40 votre living-room, une image géante sur le mur. Comme au cinéma.
Les Américains, qui jouissent généralement d'amples living-rooms,
ont résolu de ne plus s'abîmer les yeux sur des rectangles
43 mesquins.

Le Nouvel Observateur
12 décembre 1981.

The interviewer began the exercise on each of the two occasions, by illustrating what she wanted the students to do. She translated the first sentences of the French text (shown opposite in Fig. 3) from "On s' imagine moderne to Le "Muppet Show"", as follows:

"You think you're modern - à la page - I don't know what that means, so I'll look it up under page in the Micro-Robert - it's got Etre à la page - être au courant - oh, up-to-date, so you think you're modern, up-to-date, over-equipped with gadgets" The interviews were taped and transcribed. In the transcriptions dashes refer to short pauses in the students' speech, dots to longer pauses. Some of the more interesting features of the recorded protocols will be described below, the letters referring to words or expressions marked in the texts.

Recorded protocols : translation from French to English.

A. bazardé

Both students S1 and S3 did not know what bazardé meant (line 7 of the text opposite), and decided to look it up in a dictionary. The relevant part of S1's recorded protocol is as follows:

"I don't know what bazardé means. I'll look it up in Micro-Robert - the verb - infinitive bazarder and it says Se défaire rapidement de quelque chose, so I'll have to look up what défaire means - I think it means defeat or something ... it means réduire à l'état - to reduce into the state of elements - I'll have to look back at bazarder and it doesn't fit.

That's not much good (the Micro-Robert) because I can't understand the definition, so I'll look it up in the bilingual dictionary (Collins Robert), so, bazarder - if I was doing it in an assignment and I didn't understand the definition I'd forget about it and go on for a bit - so, bazarder, to get rid of, ditch, yep that sounds alright, to get rid of, throw away,"

(the articles for bazarder and défaire in the Micro-Robert are shown in Fig. 4, as are some other relevant dictionary extracts).

Dictionary articles

BAZAR [bazɑ̃]. *n. m.* • 1° Marché public en Orient. V. Souk. • 2° Lieu, magasin où l'on vend toutes sortes d'objets, d'ustensiles. • 3° Maison, pièce en désordre. *Quel bazar!* — *Pop.* Affaires, attirail. *Emporter tout son bazar.* ▽ **BAZARDER**. *v. tr.* (l). Se défaire rapidement de (qqch.). *Je vais bazarder tout ça chez le brocanteur.*

MR

DÉFAIRE [defɛʁ]. *v. tr.* (60) ★ I. • 1° Réduire (ce qui était construit, assemblé) à l'état d'éléments. *Défaire une installation.* • 2° Supprimer l'ordre, l'arrangement de (qqch.). *Défaire un paquet. Défaire sa valise.* en défaire le contenu. *Défaire son lit.* • 3° Détacher, dénouer (les pièces d'un vêtement). *Défaire sa cravate, sa ceinture.* ★ II. Se défaire. *v. pron.* • 1° Cesser d'être fait, arrangé. *Couture, nœud qui se défont.* — *Les destinées se font et se défont.* • 2° Se débarrasser (de qqn ou qqch.). *Se défaire d'un employé.* V. Congédier, renvoyer. *Se défaire de mauvaises habitudes.* — Se débarrasser (de qqch.) en vendant. *Je ne veux pas m'en défaire.* ▽ **DÉFAIT**, **AITE**. *adj.* • 1° Qui n'est plus fait, arrangé. *Lit défait.* V. Dérangé (en). • 2° Qui semble épuisé. *L'usage défait.* *Mine dé faite.*

MR

bazarder* [bazɑ̃de] (l) *vt* (jeter) to get rid of, chuck out*, ditch*; (vendre) to flog, get rid of, sell off.

CR

MICROSILLON [mikʁosijɔ̃]. *n. m.* • Disque de longue durée (33 tours/minute) à sillons très petits.

MR

microsillon [mikʁosijɔ̃] *nm* (sillon) microgroove. (disque) ~ long-playing record, L.P.

CR

MUNIR [myɛnɪ]. *v. tr.* (2) • 1° Garnir (qqch.), pourvoir (qqn) de ce qui est nécessaire, utile pour une fin déterminée. V. Équiper, pourvoir. *Munir un voyageur d'un peu d'argent. Caméra munie de deux objectifs.* • 2° Pronom. Se munir de. V. Prendre. *Se munir d'un imperméable.* Se munir de patience. V. Armer (s').

MR

constituer [kɔ̃stitɥe] (l) I *vt* (a) (fonder) comité, ministère, gouvernement, société anonyme to set up, form; bibliothèque to build up; collection to build up, put together; dossier to make up, put together.

(b) (composer) to make up, constitute, compose. les pièces qui constituent cette collection the pieces that (go to) make up ou that constitute this collection; sa collection est surtout constituée de porcelaines his collection is made up ou is composed ou consists mainly of pieces of porcelain.

(c) (être, représenter) to constitute. ceci constitue un délit/ne constitue pas un motif that constitutes an offence/does not constitute a motive; ce billet de 10 F constitue toute ma fortune this 10-franc note constitutes ou represents my entire fortune; ils constituent un groupe homogène they make up ou form a well-knit group.

(d) (Jur.) (établir) rente, pension, dot to settle (d on); avocat to retain. ~ qn son héritier to appoint sb one's heir; ~ qn à la

CR

pinceau, pl ~x [pɛso] *nm* (gén.) brush; (Peinture) (paint)brush (fig: manière de peindre) brushwork; (: pied) foot, hoof ~ lumineux pencil of light; V coup.

CR

pinceau, x [pɛso] *nm* (peint.) brush.

CG

cinéma-thèque [sinematek] *nf* film archives ou library; (salle) film theatre.

CR

rayon [ʁajɔ̃] *nm* (de soleil etc) ray; (GEO) radius; (de roue) spoke; (étagère) shelf (pl shelves); (de grand magasin) department; (de rue) (boney)comb; dans un ~ de within a radius of; ~ d'action range; — de soleil sunbeam, ray of sunlight; — X X-rays.

CG

1. **MATRICE** [matʁis]. *n. f.* • Vx. Utérus. 2. **MATRICE**. *n. f.* ★ I. Moule qui, après avoir reçu une empreinte particulière en creux et en relief, permet de la reproduire. *La matrice d'un disque, d'une médaille.* ★ II. En mathématiques, Tableau rectangulaire de nombres, sur lesquels on définit certaines opérations. ▽ **MATRICIEL**, **IELLE**. *adj.* Ou interviennent les matrices (ll). *Calcul matriciel.*

MR

1. **MOULE** [mɔ̃l]. *n. m.* • 1° Corps solide creusé et façonné, dans lequel on verse une substance liquide ou pâteuse qui, solidifiée, conserve la forme. Objet plein sur lequel on applique une substance plastique pour qu'elle en prenne la forme. V. Forme, matrice; mouler. *Moule de sculpteur. Moule à pâtisserie.* • 2° Loc. Être fait au moule, bien fait. • 3° Forme imposée de l'extérieur (à la personnalité, au caractère, à une œuvre).

MR

2. **MOULE** [mɔ̃l]. *n. f.* • 1° Mollusque comestible, aux valves oblongues d'un bleu ardoise. *Paire de moules. Moules de bouchot* (piquet d'élevage). *Manger des moules au naturel.* • 2° *Pop.* Personne molle; imbécile. *Quelle moule!* V. Nourille.

SILLON [sijɔ̃]. *n. m.* • 1° Longue tranchée ouverte dans la terre par la charrue. — *Pop.* (au plur.). Champs cultivés. • 2° Ligne, ride. — En anatomie, Les sillons du cerveau, les rainures qui séparent les circonvolutions. • 3° Trace produite à la surface du disque par l'enregistrement phonographique. V. Microsillon.

MR

sillon [sijɔ̃] *nm* (a) [champ] furrow. (littér) les ~s the (ploughed) fields; (fig littér) creuser son ~ to plough one's (own) furrow. (b) (fig: ride, rayure) furrow. (c) (Anat) fissure. (d) [disque] groove.

CR

Key: MR = Micro-Robert

CR = Collins Robert

CG = Collins Gem

This example illustrates a number of points. First, the student, who did normally use this dictionary, consulted the monolingual Micro-Robert. He began by reading the dictionary article for bazarder in French. He did not understand the definition and so he decided to look up défaire. Although this could be attributed to his brevity of description, it should be noted that he said he would look up défaire and not se défaire, and he did in fact do exactly that. Of course, he was then unable to 'fit' the definition of défaire back into that for bazarder. Also, in the case of défaire, the student began by reading the definition in French and then he began again and translated it into English (this is an interesting insight, since some teachers believe that using a monolingual dictionary encourages the student to work within the language and not via translation). S1 then abandoned the monolingual dictionary and consulted the Collins Robert. Without any hesitation he read out the equivalents and seemed to decide on one. However, he did not appear to have read the material given in parentheses, so that he missed "(vendre) to flog, get rid of, sell off" and opted instead for one of the first possibilities given under "(jeter).". (See Fig. 4.) In his defense, he may not have been aware at that point of the translation of the wider context; the students were not given any opportunity to acquaint themselves with the text before the exercise began. Note that student S3 who went straight to Collins Robert dictionary did exactly the same thing:

"bazardé - I'll look up bazarder - (in Collins Robert) - to get rid of, chuck out, ditch - alright ditched ..."

What is clear from the dictionary article for bazarder is that the parenthetical synonymic material (vendre) and its equivalents come second in the article, and it would appear that both students took the first possibility which 'fitted' (a criticism that teachers made of students in Chapter 2).

B. dégringoler, pochette, lucarne (lines 8, 10 and 37 of text)

In a number of cases where a monolingual dictionary was consulted the student did as S1 above did, that is translated the definition into English, or used a mixture of English and

French e.g. dégringoler: "it says descend précipitamment" (S1, descend in English) or pochette: "it's got a petit enveloppe - of material or paper" (S2), or lucarne: "lucarne is a little window, um, something in the roof of a building - or a little opening in a wall - and something else I don't know" (S2). That is, it would appear that these students did not "work within the [French] language", they simply translated the definition. However their 'translation' is not the same as the single word equivalents of the bilingual dictionary.

C. sillon (line 18 of text)

Student S2 looked this word up in the Micro-Robert and said: "I think it means lines - it's got ligne, ride - oh, no, down below just below that it's got trace produite à la surface du disque." He had found the appropriate meaning but unfortunately could not think what the 'word' was in English. S3 who used a bilingual dictionary said: "furrow? groove - the grooves of the video-disk" with no hesitation.

D. In some instances, as for bazarder above, the student appeared to be unaware of, or ignored the wider context of the article. This seems to be an ability present in different students to different degrees; S2 showed on a number of occasions a firm grasp of the wider context. S1 often appeared to be translating almost word-for-word (something that the exercise unfortunately seemed to encourage) and chose an equivalent from the bilingual dictionary when one more appropriate to the context was available elsewhere in the dictionary article. For example in translating the sentence "... entreprennent de constituer d'étonnants cinémathèques" S1 looked up entreprendre, constituer and cinémathèque, all in the Collins Robert French Dictionary. For the word constituer he said, "... set up, to put together, um, to constitute, compose ... to ... that constitutes all - no it won't be that to appoint ... it looks like it must mean something, um, to make or constitute" He did not apparently have the word cinémathèque in mind because he ignored the entry under the first general semantic division: fonder which was "bibliothèque to build up" although he did pick out "put together" from "collection, to build up, put together." (see p.87). Similarly, when he

looked up cinémathèque he said, "it's got film archives, or library, or film theatre, sounds like film theatre" Whether he was misled in this last case by his choice of equivalent for constituer is not clear. However, it is apparent that once one 'wrong' choice has been made the student may continue to opt for 'wrong' choices that 'fit'.

E. Au rayon Télévision (line 35 of text)

This phrase caused both students S2 and S4 problems. S2 looked up rayon in Collins Gem Dictionary first and then in the Micro-Robert (where there were three separate entries). When the interviewer prompted him: "You're in a shop", he immediately said: "So it's a Department. That was in Collins Gem; it said a Department but ----." The other student S4 looked the word rayon up in her old Harrap's dictionary (she had already been told that the word did not mean 'beam' here). After a long interval in which she returned physically to the text to check the context (which suggests, and she did the same in at least one other instance, that she did not have the context in mind), she said that she did not think the 'right' meaning was in her dictionary. It was, of course, but she could not connect it with the context.

F. rien à voir (line 36 of text)

This phrase illustrates the problem of looking up an expression, particularly when the words involved are common ones. The student S2 recognised it as an "idiom", he had "seen before." He decided to look it up under voir first, in the Micro-Robert, and discovered that the article was very long. After a long silence he decided to look under rien because the article might be shorter ("not much though" he found). Finally, he gave up, agreeing that if he had more time he would go back to the entry for voir and look right through it (he actually started reading it half-way through, at représenter because he had a "feeling" that it (rien à voir) might be there). Interestingly, when this student resumed his translation he actually said, without any prompting, "nothing to do with ...", although he had originally recognised it as an "idiom" he had seen before.

G. All the students agreed that without being aware of it

or having ever thought about it, they did look up the infinitive of verbs and the singular forms of nouns, etc. In a few cases the students had some temporary difficulty in deciding what was the infinitive form of a verb e.g. "entreprennent ... I'll just look up entreprendre, ah, entreprendre ..." (S1) and "... entreprennent ... [what are you looking up?] Entreprenner, entreprendre [No, entreprendre]" (S4). With past participles used as adjectives e.g. bazardé, emboutis, munis, the students did not hesitate to look up the infinitive verb form.

H. pinceau lumineux (line 20 of text)

One student S2 looked this up under pinceau in his Collins Gem dictionary and found brush, so he concluded reluctantly that it must be a "luminous brush". (He had already translated lumineux before he came to pinceau.) The other student S3 looked pinceau up in the Collins Robert, "luminous, unmaterial - I'll have to look up pinceau - brush, I suppose?" The phrase "~ lumineux pencil of light" was there in the third line of the three-line entry for pinceau, but this student either did not read that far, or had already forgotten the word "lumineux". The first dictionary consulted (Collins Gem) did not contain the expression because it is pocket-sized, the second contained it but the student failed, apparently, to read it.

The extracts A - H above which have been commented on, serve to highlight some of the difficulties students can have with using dictionaries for comprehension purposes. It is obviously not a straightforward process (as Scholfield has suggested²⁴), and although to a certain extent the quality of the dictionary is a variable, the student (in the care he or she takes in reading the dictionary entry, and/or in his/her ability to understand and keep the context involved in mind, among other things) also constitutes a variable. Almost all the instances of 'mistranslation' cited above were due to student carelessness. One case where a student used a monolingual dictionary to find the meaning of the phrase "matrice-moule" appeared impressive in the way it illustrated

24. Scholfield, P., op. cit.

how he had held the wider context in his mind. However, on closer inspection of the relevant dictionary articles afterwards i.e. those for matrice and moule, it was found that under the entry for matrice (which he had looked up first) there was an example: "La matrice d'un disque...". If he had noticed that, he could have saved himself the trouble of looking up moule. Because the students when they read out the equivalents from the dictionary article did exactly that, that is read out the equivalents and never mentioned the parenthetical material, and because in a number of instances they appeared to have ignored such material, it is tempting to suggest that they did not normally read it, at least for comprehension (teachers' comments in Chapter 2 would indicate that at least some students do not read it for production either).

Since the original aim of this exercise involving recorded protocols (at least the comprehension part of it) was to try and identify, as Van Parreren had done for contextual guessing, the strategies involved in dictionary consultation for comprehension, it is worth looking again at his conclusions (discussed in more detail in Chapter 1). The analysis of his subjects' recorded protocols indicated that subjects when they guessed the meanings of unknown words in foreign language texts were acting on four different linguistic levels: (a) the syntactic level, (b) the semantic level, (c) the lexical level and (d) the stylistic level. Van Parreren found that there was a hierarchy of levels, beginning with the syntactic level, and that a subject could not act correctly on one level if an error had been made at a lower level.

The idea of dictionary use for comprehension involving a hypothesis testing process is not unreasonable. Even if the consultant is unaware of it, he must have something in mind against which to test the various possibilities as a consequence of which he finally accepts one and rejects the others. At the very least he must know whether the word whose meaning or equivalent he seeks is a noun, a verb, etc. That is, it is clear that the successful dictionary consultant must have this minimal information (the lowest 'syntactic' level of Van Parreren's hierarchy). All the

students here seemed to illustrate their possession of this basic syntactic level information (none of them confused parts of speech). However, because dictionary consultation is involved, the grasp of syntactic information is even more important, since, for example, it may be necessary, as it was in this exercise, after finding an unknown verb form (including past participles used adjectively) to look up the infinitive, to find the meaning or equivalent of the infinitive, and to transpose this meaning back into the appropriate verb form to suit the context.

All four students were acting on a semantic level when they chose from among the possibilities in a dictionary article one equivalent or meaning. However, they did not all act equally successfully, one student (S2) having a particular ability to see the wider context. In other cases, students acted incorrectly on this level either because they ignored the context, or because having made one error of judgement (in either contextual guessing or dictionary use) they then were obliged to 'distort' the context to fit the equivalent they had chosen. In some cases even, the students' knowledge of the wider world misled them; they were all familiar with video-cassettes and failed to note that it was a video-disk which was being discussed in the passage which led them to misinterpret other words.

There were no apparent cases where students were acting on the lexical level, although in the case of the verb constituer the student (S1) seemed to have trouble choosing a French equivalent because of his confusion with the English word. Finally, if students appeared to act on a stylistic level it was simply because the bilingual dictionary they used gave equivalents in the same register as the French word(s). The use of Van Parreren's two lower levels, the syntactic and semantic, at least, was illustrated by these students, and although no errors were made at the lower level, there were certainly errors made at the semantic level where the context (and the student's knowledge and awareness of it) became critical.

Recorded protocols: translation from English to French.

A short passage of colloquial New Zealand English

Text: English to French translation

Beans

Every Saturday morning in the winter term I bike into town to play Rugby. Winter's a great time. We live three miles out of town and the way in is mostly uphill, so I need to get a good early start to be in town by nine. On the way in I don't get a chance to look around me or notice things very much because the going is fairly hard. Now and again where it gets a bit steep I have to stand up on the pedals and really tread hard.

But it's great getting off to Rugby on a Saturday morning with my towel and change on the carrier, and pushing hard to get there by nine. It's great. (...)

[We have an old lady living next to us. She's pretty old and she doesn't do much except walk around her garden.]
One day I heard her say to Mum, "He's full of beans that boy of yours. Full of beans."

[Patricia Grace: The Dream Sleepers and other stories]

stand (stænd) *n* (position) position
// (vill) résistance *f*; (structure)
garçon *m*; support *m*; (comm)
étalage *m*; stand *m*; (sport)
tribune *f* // *vb* (pt pp stood) (stand)
vi être or se tenir debout; (rise)
se lever, se mettre debout; (the
platform) se trouver // *vt* (place)
mettre, poser; (tolerate, withstand)
supporter; to make a ~ prendre
position; to ~ for parliament se
présenter aux élections (comme
candidat à la députation); it ~s to
reason c'est lorsque cela va de
soi; to ~ by in the ready se tenir
prêt // *vt fus* (opinion) s'en tenir
à; to ~ for *vt fus* (defend)
défendre, être pour; (signify)
représenter, signifier; (tolerate)
supporter, tolérer; to ~ in for *vt fus*
remplacer; to ~ out *vt* (be
prominent) ressortir; to ~ up *vt*
(rise) se lever, se mettre debout;
to ~ up for *vt fus* défendre; to ~
up to *vt fus* tenir tête à, résister
à.

uphill (ˈʌpɦɪl) *a* qui monte; (fig)
difficile, pénible // *adv* to go
~ monter.

steep (sti:p) *a* raide, escarpé(e);
(price) très élevé(e), excessif(ive)
// *vt* (laure) tremper.

All extracts from
Collins Gem.

pedal (ˈpedl) 1 *n* (all types) pédale *f*. (piano) loud ~ pédale forte
or de droite; soft ~ pédale douce or sourde or de gauche; *V*
clutch etc.
2 *cpd*: pedalbin poubelle *f* à pédale; pedalcarr voiture *f* à
pédales; pedalbont pédalo *m*.
3 *vi* (cyclist) pédaler. he ~led through the town il traversa la
ville (à bicyclette); *V* soft.
4 *vi* machine, cycle appuyer sur la or les pédale(s) de.
pedant (ˈpedənt) *n* pédant(e) *m/f*.
pedantic (ˈpɪdɪntɪk) *adj* pédant, pédantesque (liter).
pedantically (ˈpɪdɪntɪkəlɪ) *adv* de façon pédante, avec pédan-
tisme.
pedantry (ˈpedəntri) *n* pédantisme *m*, pédanterie *f* (liter).
peddle (ˈpedl) 1 *vi* faire du colportage. 2 *vi* goods colporter; (fig
pe) gossip colporter, répandre; ideas propager; drugs faire le
trafic de.

Extract from Collins Robert
French Dictionary.

(extracted from Grace's The Dream Sleepers and shown in Fig. 5) was used for the purpose of translating from English to French. In this case the students looked up few words in their (bilingual) dictionaries. No student suggested checking the information found in a monolingual dictionary (but then only two of them ever used one). Some relevant features of the recorded protocols will be described below:

A. The passage read: "I bike into town." Both students S2 and S3 translated that as, "je vais à bicyclette". When it was pointed out to them that it said "bike" and not "bicycle" student S2 immediately suggested "vélo" while student S3 said: "Is there a more slang sort of word [in French]?" "Bike", she continued, "they won't have bike in here" (in the Collins Robert). This is an interesting reflection of the belief that slang words will not appear in dictionaries, and they probably do not in most older, smaller bilingual dictionaries. However, once assured that "bike" was in that particular dictionary, the student looked it up, found it, and correctly altered her translation.

B. The passage read: "the way is mostly uphill." Student S2, not knowing what "uphill" was, decided to look it up in his Collins Gem dictionary. "Uphill - is it one word here? - it's got qui monte or difficile or pénible talking about a task, that's figurative, I suppose - to go uphill is monter - is that the context here? - the way is mostly uphill - so et la voie monte" Student S3 decided to look up "uphill" in the Collins Robert. She said "- up - uphill - en haut? - au dessus?, no ... [long silence] - en travaux - it says the road is and then it's got a wee dash - I suppose that means uphill cos it said uphill at the beginning" It did not, in fact. This student, who did not apparently note as student S2 did, that "uphill" was one word, started to look it up under "up" and in the course of reading a longish entry apparently got confused and thought it was an entry for "uphill". She deduced, correctly, that the "wee dash" meant the head-word, but she had the wrong head-word. She also failed to look closely at the French she was suggesting as an equivalent, which if she had thought about it at all should have made her suspicious of its correctness.

C. The passage read: "stand up on the pedals and really tread hard." Student S2 decided he was not quite sure of the equivalent of "stand up". He said: "I'm giving up on standing up and I'm looking it up in Collins Gem - um - stand up's way down the bottom of Collins Gem when I looked there first - se lever, se mettre debout, so that's what it is, so [.....] je dois me mettre debout sur les pédales et tread - tread I'm looking up as well in Collins Gem - tread - is that how you spell it? - um - well they've just got marcher and marcher sur - for to tread on, but I don't think that's what they [the passage] mean - so I'll try Collins Robert" After a long silence, he decided that there was no suitable equivalent under "tread", and so he looked up the verb "pedal". Finally, he rejected pédaler because of the proximity of pédales and opted for "et travailler vraiment dur." Student S3, on the other hand, began with "je dois - stand up on the pedals - me tenir - me lever - me tenir - sur les pedals ... [she consults Collins Robert for pedal] ... oh, pédale, no that's piano, oh no that's all types - sur les pédales et tread - pédaler? (laughs) - I'll see what the verb is for pedal - how about faire du colportage - no that must mean to peddle goods or something - doesn't have it ["Doesn't it?" the interviewer asked.] "No, it's got ... no it doesn't have it - it's only got faire du colportage...." ["Which means to peddle goods - that's the other ... you are spelling it right", the interviewer said.] "Is the p-e-d-d-l-e - oh -" ["Pedal, the verb is spelt the same way as the noun" the interviewer interposed.] "Pedal - so it is - it is pédaler or traverser la ville à bicyclette. I'll put appuyer dur sur les pédales."

This last is an example of the type of error that at least one teacher mentioned, that is the student not being able to spell the English word (and thus choosing the wrong French equivalent). However, in this case, the student was sufficiently aware to realise that faire du colportage was not what she wanted. In these last two examples both students referred to parenthetical material: student S2 referred in his reading of the article for "uphill" to what is shown as "(fig. task) difficile, pénible" and rejected these possibilities. Student S3 when she looked up "pedal" (the noun) obviously saw "[piano] loud~" which nearly

distracted her before she went back to the material she had missed "(all types) pédale". Since she actually said "pédale, no that's piano" she apparently had missed the parenthetical material preceding the equivalent, perhaps because she was simply looking for the equivalent. When the students were using the dictionary for comprehension they appeared on a number of instances to not read the parenthetical material (perhaps because it was in French).

D. The short extract concludes with the expression "full of beans". The first student, S2, the best of the four, simply translated this as "plein de haricots". Only after much discussion did he reluctantly accept that it did not mean literally "full of (baked?) beans". He then looked the expression up under "bean" in his Collins Gem and suggested "plein de joie". The other student S4 who recognised the idiomatic nature of the expression looked it up under "bean" in her 1940 Harrap's Shorter and suggested "il est gaillard", which would seem to be rather dated.

Generally these students had less trouble with using their dictionaries for production than for comprehension and they even sometimes rejected what they found in the dictionary in favour of some other way they had thought of expressing the English; this should please those who think that students have too ready recourse to the dictionary. However, among the examples of dictionary consultation there were instances in which the 'classic' type of error that teachers complained of was at least imminent.

Although this exercise involving recorded protocols was rather artificial in that the students were really being encouraged to consult a dictionary (at least in the comprehension part) where they might normally be encouraged to guess the meanings of unknown words, it is still quite revealing. In the first part of the exercise the students were generally taking 15 - 25 seconds to find and give the meaning or equivalent of a straightforward comprehension item. Certainly in many cases they seem to have sacrificed reading the information given in parentheses in the entries, for speed. But, unless dictionary consultation is a fairly speedy, straightforward operation students will tend not to

bother. Whether this is a bad thing or not will depend on the importance of the word to an understanding of the passage and will in any case be debatable (some people seeing no virtue at all in dictionary consultation for comprehension). This question of the importance of the word to the context suggests that students might be trained to work out when they should look up unknown words, and when they should not bother (as Clarke and Nation have suggested²⁵).

What else does this exercise reveal about dictionary use? In short, its variety. Student S2 used both his Collins Gem and Micro-Robert dictionaries and seemed to be aware of when one would be suitable and not the other. He appeared to recognise the limitations of his very small bilingual dictionary and surmise (correctly) which words would be likely to be in it. He did read the parenthetical material and overall showed considerable familiarity with his (well-thumbed) dictionaries. Student S1 used the Micro-Robert (which he claimed he 'normally' consulted) and the Collins Robert which he was not familiar with. He did not read the parenthetical material in the latter when he used it for comprehension. Neither of the two female students used a monolingual dictionary normally. Student S4, the weakest of the four students, owned and used her 1940 edition of Harrap's Shorter. She did seem to be aware that it might not be up-to-date. Student S3 used the Collins Robert with which she was not familiar in the exercise; she, like student S1, failed to read parenthetical material in using the dictionary for comprehension. She expressed doubt that slang words would be in the dictionary, perhaps revealing familiarity only with older-style dictionaries.

Conclusion.

In this Chapter examples of the actual usage of dictionaries by a number of Stage I Canterbury students have been described. It is too easy when reading the summarised figures presented in Chapter 3 to conclude, as was done, that there is some sort of uniformity in dictionary usage. What this chapter shows, on the contrary, is its variety.

25. Clarke, A.P., and I.S.P. Nation, op. cit. p.217.

It also adds an element of realism to what was basically a fairly optimistic picture of dictionary practice among these language students, as presented in the last chapter, and incidentally tends to confirm the more pessimistic view of the teachers reported in Chapter 2.

The two exercises presented here demonstrate, if nothing else, that dictionary consultation for either comprehension or production is a far from straightforward process. In the first exercise where the students reported on a specific instance of dictionary usage it appeared that when they have sufficient incentive (marks for an assignment) students are remarkably persistent in tracking down the meaning of unknown words. They also reported almost total success with their use of the dictionary for comprehension (often, admittedly after consulting more than one dictionary). Their reported success was, however, in a number of cases more imaginary than real i.e. they appeared to be more confident about their ability to extract information from their dictionaries than the results of their consultations would sometimes justify.

In the second exercise in which four students 'thought aloud' while translating and consulting dictionaries, it became apparent that there is, as their teachers had suggested, a tendency to pick the first possibility that 'fits'. Although for comprehension the students seemed to all act correctly at the syntactical level i.e. they did for example look for a verb in the dictionary when it was a verb which was unknown, they quite frequently made errors on the semantic level. That is, either through carelessness due to too rapid perusal of dictionary articles or because of their lack of awareness of both the immediate and wider context of an unknown word they often chose the wrong equivalent or meaning. In addition, certain errors of the 'classic' type were illustrated.

In both the exercises described students appeared to have fewer problems with using their dictionaries for production purposes than they did for comprehension, although they rarely sought information on usage (including grammatical information). Teachers, on the other hand, tended to describe errors which were mainly found in production. This perhaps reinforces the idea which has been previously

suggested that errors in comprehension are harder to detect, since comprehension is often tested by asking students to respond in French. Only when students respond in English may errors due to comprehension failure be clearly assigned as such.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION: THE ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL ROLE
OF THE DICTIONARY IN THE LANGUAGE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

In this study of student and teacher attitudes to the use of dictionaries in French language teaching and learning, there is a clear acknowledgement of the 'quantity' of dictionary use. All the students used dictionaries in their French studies, almost all used one at least weekly, and many, more frequently.

Dictionary use.

On what does dictionary use depend? Firstly, on the nature of the tasks that students must carry out as part of the teaching/learning process. That is, in general terms, on whether they need to comprehend French or produce it. The dictionary is, however, only one of the reference tools available to students. Most will also use text-books and/or grammars particularly for the production of French. Secondly, dictionary use depends on the accessibility of dictionaries. Students more frequently used dictionaries they owned than those available for consultation in Libraries and Departments. Dictionary ownership in turn depends on three related factors, i.e. on teacher recommendations, on student preferences for bilingual or monolingual dictionaries, and on the cost and availability of dictionaries.

Teachers' recommendations of dictionaries are very influential; in this area, at least, students tend to follow the advice of their teachers. All monolingual dictionaries were bought because teachers recommended them (and ordered them specially through university bookshops). Teacher recommendations were also a factor in the purchase of bilingual dictionaries, but in the absence of such

recommendations students still tended to buy bilingual dictionaries. This is because, as the survey makes clear, students prefer bilingual dictionaries for both comprehension and production purposes (at least for initial consultation).

Varying proportions of the students surveyed (ranging from 8 to 77% of the five student groups) used only bilingual dictionaries. This may be directly attributed to the teachers' recommendations regarding the purchase of a dictionary. Where teachers recommended a monolingual dictionary, their students usually bought and used it (to a lesser extent than their bilingual dictionaries, admittedly, but still to a much greater extent than those who did not own one at all). Where bilingual dictionaries were recommended, students rarely used anything else. That is, teachers not only have an influence on the dictionary purchases of their students, they also indirectly influence their use of them since students tend, as was mentioned above, to use the dictionaries they own more than those they may borrow. However, if teachers who recommend monolingual dictionaries can have a positive influence on their students' use of this type of dictionary, they may also unintentionally have a negative influence in regard to bilingual dictionaries. That is, all students use bilingual dictionaries, and the majority of them favour the bilingual dictionary over the monolingual one for most purposes. This means that where monolingual dictionaries only are recommended, the students have the choice of a bilingual dictionary left up to them, and often choose a cheaper, smaller dictionary. So that, at university level at least, students whose teachers recommend bilingual dictionaries tend to use the better and more recent ones as compared with students whose teachers recommend monolingual dictionaries (only).

The final factor affecting student ownership of dictionaries, which has already been alluded to, is the cost/availability of dictionaries. Monolingual dictionaries are rarely available unless teachers specially order them for their students. Bilingual dictionaries, on the other hand, are widely available, at a wide range of prices and qualities. In the absence of teacher guidance the choice of a bilingual dictionary for purchase may be determined largely by cost.

Dictionary consultation - student views.

For what purposes do students use dictionaries? As far as the university students are concerned, about a fifth of them reported that they mainly use dictionaries for help with the comprehension of French, a fifth mainly for help with the production of French, and the remaining three fifths use them equally for both purposes. As far as specific uses of dictionaries are concerned, most students, most frequently, sought the meanings of French words, equivalents, spelling and gender, grammatical information, examples of usage and idiomatic expressions. The majority of students consulted bilingual dictionaries for all these purposes, including for the meanings of French words. Many students do not appear to distinguish between the definitions of the monolingual dictionary and the equivalents of the bilingual one, which may reflect their conception of dictionaries as mere word-lists. This conception may be due to early familiarity with the glossaries appended to text-books and to pocket-sized bilingual dictionaries which rarely suggest more than one equivalent for a given French or English word. This may also explain why students prefer to use bilingual dictionaries (which are easier to consult), why they have a tendency to choose the first word which 'fits', and why many of them fail to notice or appreciate the wealth of information given in the larger monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

In their responses to the questionnaire (discussed in Chapter 3) the students can be seen to have been giving a generalised picture of their behaviour vis-à-vis their dictionaries. They were not asked, and presumably did not give a description of their behaviour in relation to a specific task, and their responses may well indicate what they think they do rather than what they actually do. It is also clear that asking students to rate their 'success' with dictionary consultation may not be the best way of gauging it. To provide a background context into which to place the generalised picture of dictionary use provided by the students, the views of French teachers were also sought (and discussed in Chapter 2).

Dictionary consultation - teacher views.

The teachers, who see the 'results' of much student dictionary consultation clearly believed that it is not always 'successful'. Strangely, in view of the predominant recommendation of bilingual dictionaries, most of the errors in students' work attributed by teachers to dictionary use were related to bilingual dictionaries (although not specifically attributed to them). Rather, it was student carelessness which was usually 'blamed'. Despite the fact that many teachers recognised that students might have difficulty with understanding the definitions of monolingual dictionaries (which was presumably a major reason for not recommending them) few errors were attributed to the use of monolingual dictionaries, although errors were attributed to students' failure to use them - for refining meanings, checking usage, etc. Only two teachers mentioned possible inadequacies in the dictionary as being a source of student error.

It was the teachers' observations of the more 'blatant' type of error caused by dictionary use which usually prompted them to give some (informal) instruction on dictionary use. No teacher gave any formal instruction, few even discussed with their students the relative merits of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. In fact, few teachers gave any specific reasons for preferring one or other type of dictionary for their students. There was fairly general agreement that monolingual dictionaries are a 'good thing', but that is practically all. The reasons given by teachers for favouring particular dictionaries for their students' use were generally unrelated to any lexicographical aspects of the dictionary i.e. few cited reasons such as the size and recency of the nomenclature, the abundance of examples of usage, the clarity of syntactical information, the clear distinction of different meanings or equivalents, the guidance on register, etc., all of which would seem to be basic requirements for dictionaries (be they bilingual or monolingual) destined for foreign language learners. Few teachers used the dictionaries they recommended to their students, perhaps revealing a certain lack of familiarity with, in particular, their possible inadequacies.

It is that, perhaps, which the present study reveals, or at least suggests - the lack of awareness of both teachers and students, on the one hand, of the inadequacies of dictionaries and, on the other hand, and this is not intended to be contradictory, of their riches. Teachers generally used for their own purposes the larger monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, and would probably not consider using many of the dictionaries their students consult. Now, it could be argued that it is the students who need access to the best lexicographical information available; they rarely find it in the dictionaries they use. In fact, there is not even any certainty that they would recognise it. Some students, of course, do use good monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, but would in many cases still not appear to be gaining full advantage from them.

There is clearly a wide variation in dictionary use and its 'success'. The student's ability is obviously critical. Very good students will recognise the limits of a pocket dictionary and extract maximum benefit from it; poor students will fail to recognise the riches of a large dictionary and gain minimally from its use. Dictionary consultation appears to be often treated as a routine operation in which speed is of the essence. Whether this is because students have become accustomed to the relative ease of consultation that glossaries appended to text-books and small bilingual dictionaries present, is not clear. Simply, that in many cases, the efforts of lexicographers on behalf of foreign language learners, are wasted.

Remedies for this situation.

What could be done to change the situation as it has been described? It seems clear that teacher attitudes and preferences are critical. Just as many students do not seem to perceive any difference between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, both being regarded as word-lists and the latter as more easy to use, there is evidence for a similar attitude among some teachers. Certainly, teachers are aware of the most obvious differences between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, but they do not seem to recognise that the monolingual dictionary is also a reflection of the

culture. If the dictionary is simply a word-list and nothing more, then the dictionary which can be consulted with the greatest ease, that is the bilingual dictionary, may be preferable. The fact that few teachers gave any lexicographical arguments in favour of particular dictionaries also reveals a rather superficial knowledge of the dictionary. But when teachers' recommendations of particular dictionaries are so influential it surely behoves them to acquaint themselves with the contents of different dictionaries, to consider these in terms of the specific needs of their students and of their likely role in the students' studies vis-à-vis text-books and grammars, and when they have made their choice (informed preferably by some knowledge of lexicography*) they should communicate the reasons for their choice to their students, indicating the advantages of the particular dictionary and its limitations.

Over and above this informed choice of dictionary, teachers should encourage their students to consult a variety of dictionaries and to check information they find in bilingual dictionaries in a monolingual dictionary (at least where the production of French is involved). They should also be prepared to justify such practices. As far as students are concerned, discussion of the strategies involved in dictionary use for comprehension purposes would obviously be helpful, particularly since it is a trainable skill.²⁶ Finally, since knowledge of dictionary conventions is so important, exercises might be set by teachers with the aim of familiarising students with such conventions.

The role of the dictionary in the language teaching/learning process.

Is the dictionary simply, as this study suggests, a reference tool with a passive role to play in the teaching/

* An illustration of the type of comparison that might be made is contained in Jones, E.D., French Dictionaries - an assessment, Canterbury Monographs for Teachers of French, No. 5, Seventh Series, 1981.

26. Scholfield, P., 'Using the English Dictionary for Comprehension', TESOL Quarterly, 16(2), p.193, 1982.

learning process? Certainly the compilers of recent monolingual dictionaries aimed at French school pupils (and foreign language learners) see their role as much more than this. Rather, the avowed aim of such dictionaries is the active promotion of vocabulary enrichment and the mastery of its usage. In the Preface of the Robert Méthodique (the most recent Robert dictionary) its compilers claim that their dictionary is designed to "affermir et étendre le vocabulaire". This dictionary offers "aux plus jeunes un indispensable outil de travail scolaire, et, à tous les autres, une synthèse originelle et immédiatement disponible d'information sur le français."²⁷ Publicity material claims that the Robert Méthodique has been "spécialement conçu pour enrichir le vocabulaire et en maîtriser l'usage."²⁸ The compilers of the Nouveau Dictionnaire du français contemporain (NDFC), in their Preface, assert that "le dictionnaire est devenu un instrument de travail indispensable pour l'apprentissage du français." They therefore have included "les informations syntaxiques, essentielles pour la compréhension et l'usage correct de la langue."²⁹ The NDFC is "une aide pour un apprentissage du lexique, de son fonctionnement morphologique, syntaxique, et sémantique."³⁰

Dictionaries such as these and the Micro-Robert and the Dictionnaire Bordas all reflect to a greater or lesser extent the underlying principles of the 'pedagogical' model of dictionary design. These principles have been identified by Jean Dubois (the editor of the NDFC) as being as follows: (a) The language is seen as being a means of communication in current use; divergences from the norm including those of literature, are avoided. Examples may not simply illustrate meanings, they may be the basis for defining meanings; (b) The language system is seen as primarily syntactic; the

27. Rey-Debove, J. and de Bellefonds, C., Présentation, Le Robert Méthodique, Robert SNL, Paris, 1983, p.VII.

28. e.g. in Le Français dans le Monde, 180, 1983.

29. Dubois, J. et al., Avant-propos, Le Nouveau Dictionnaire du français contemporain, Larousse, Paris, 1980, p.V.

30. Ibid., p.VII.

sentence takes precedence over the word; (c) The lexis is seen as a complex structure; words are no longer seen as forming an inventory whose members only have loose links with each other. Derivatives are related to words with which they have semantic, syntactic, morphological and/or etymological links; (d) The relationships of meaning which exist between words which are only synonyms or antonyms are taken into account and defined in terms of the constructions in which they function, since a word may be a synonym (or antonym) in one context but not another.³¹

This 'pedagogical' model of dictionary design has implications for foreign language learners as well as for native language learners, so that a dictionary destined for the use of the former will show an appreciation of the fact that (a) words derive meaning from their context; syntactic information will make this clear, (b) the mastery of the usage of a word requires not only this syntactic information but also examples of expressions (idiomatic or other) in which the word is commonly used and information about its register and (c) words are linked one to another; vocabulary extension will be promoted through the highlighting of relationships between members of the same 'word-family' and through the systematic listing of synonyms and antonyms. It is these factors (which, incidentally, reveal the dictionary as being far more than a word-list) which are basic to many recent monolingual French dictionaries and which are at least acknowledged in the most recent, larger bilingual dictionaries. However, there remains a gap between the presence of such material in dictionaries and the students' willingness or ability to gain access to it. The lasting influence of the use of word-list type dictionaries cannot be overlooked.

There has been a swing back to the formal teaching of vocabulary to foreign language learners³²; the dictionary, as the compilers of the above-mentioned French monolingual

31. Dubois, J., Models of the Dictionary: Evolution in Dictionary Design, Applied Linguistics, II(3), pp.240-1, 1981.

32. Meara, P., 'Vocabulary acquisition: a neglected aspect of language learning', Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts, 13, pp.221-46, 1980.

dictionaries, at least, believe, has a potentially valuable role here. In the meantime, the French language students whose dictionary use has been described in this study, often appear to treat the dictionary as simply a mundane reference tool, frequently but inadequately used, and largely unappreciated. As Barthes has pointed out, the dictionary "informe, il renseigne, il enseigne même, pour peu qu'on veuille bien le lire, et non pas seulement le consulter."

The dictionary, he continues, can be simply "un outil indispensable de connaissance," but it can also be "une machine à rêver."³³ Although, not yet, apparently, for many of the present students. Nor does the dictionary appear to have for them the qualities that Galisson ascribes to it: "On peut faire l'hypothèse qu'en tant que remède potentiel contre l'inquiétude légitime qu'éprouve l'apprenant face à un paysage langagier dont il perçoit mal les contours et les chausse-trapes, le dictionnaire est un lieu d'engendrement de fantasmes, un refuge de l'imaginaire, un recours mythique contre les dures réalités du monde à conquérir."³⁴

33. Barthes, R., Préface, Dictionnaire Hachette, Paris, Hachette, 1980, p.VII.

34. Galisson, R., 'Image et usage du dictionnaire chez des étudiants (en langue) de niveau avancé', Etudes de linguistique appliquée, 49, p.19, 1983.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Ewen Jones in the preparation of this thesis. It was he who first aroused my interest in dictionaries, who encouraged and advised me during my research, and who critically commented on my thesis draft.

I also wish to acknowledge the help of all the French students and teachers who participated in the surveys and, in particular, that of Mr. Ken Allott.

Bibliography

(restricted to dictionary related works consulted)

- Atkins, B. et al, Collins Robert French Dictionary, London, Collins, 1978.
- Baxter, J., 'The Dictionary and Vocabulary Behavior: a Single Word or a Handful?', TESOL Quarterly, XIV(3), pp.325-36, 1980.
- Béjoint, H., 'The Foreign Student's Use of Monolingual English Dictionaries: A Study of Language Needs and Reference Skills', Applied Linguistics, II(3), pp.207-22, 1981.
- Bensoussan, M., 'Dictionaries and tests of EFL reading comprehension', ELT Journal, 37(4), pp.341-5, 1983.
- Candel, D., 'A propos de dictionnaires du français langue étrangère', Etudes de linguistique appliquée, 49, pp.110-26, 1983.
- Collignon, L. and Glatigny, M., Les dictionnaires: initiation à la lexicographie, Paris, CEDIC, 1978.
- Cowie, A.P., 'Lexicography and its Pedagogic Applications: An Introduction', Applied Linguistics, II(3), pp.203-6, 1981.
- Darbelnet, J., 'Dictionnaires bilingues et lexicologie différentielle', Langages, 19, pp.92-102, 1970.
- Debeyser, F., 'De meilleurs dictionnaires bilingues?', Le Français dans le Monde, 159, pp.37-42, 1981.
- Descamps, J.L. and Vaunaize, R., 'Le dictionnaire au jour le jour en milieu adulte: une pré-enquête', Etudes de linguistique appliquée, 49, pp.89-109, 1983.
- Dubois, J. et al, Nouveau Dictionnaire du français contemporain, Paris, Larousse, 1980.
- Dubois, J., 'Models of the Dictionary: Evolution in Dictionary Design', Applied Linguistics, II(3), pp.236-49, 1981.
- Dubois, J. and Dubois, C., Introduction à la lexicographie: le dictionnaire, Paris, Larousse, 1971.
- Gak, V.G., 'La langue et le discours dans un dictionnaire bilingue', Langages, 19, pp.104-15, 1970.
- Galisson, R., 'Image et usage du dictionnaire chez des étudiants (en langue) de niveau avancé', Etudes de linguistique appliquée, 49, pp.5-88, 1983.
- Gross, G. and Ibrahim, A., 'Dictionnaires du français langue étrangère', Le Français dans le Monde, 159, pp.26-31, 1981.

- Householder, F.W. and Saporta, S. (eds.), Problems in lexicography, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1962.
- Ilson, R., 'Etymological information: can it help our students?', ELT Journal, 37(1), pp.76-82, 1983.
- Jones, E.D., French dictionaries - an assessment, Canterbury Monographs for Teachers of French, No.5, Seventh Series, Christchurch, French Dept., University of Canterbury, 1981.
- Rey, A., Le lexique: image et modèles. Du dictionnaire à la lexicologie, Paris, Colin, 1977.
- Rey, A. et al, Micro-Robert, Dictionnaire du français primordial, Paris, Robert SNL, 1973.
- Rey-Debove, J., Le domaine du dictionnaire, Langages, 19, pp.3-34, 1970.
- Rey-Debove, J. et al, Le Robert Méthodique. Dictionnaire du français actuel, Paris, Robert SNL, 1982.
- Scholfield, P., 'Using the English Dictionary for Comprehension', TESOL Quarterly, 16(2), pp.185-94, 1982.
- Tomaszczyk, J., 'Dictionaries: users and uses', Glottodidactica, 12, pp.103-19, 1979.
- Underhill, A., Use your dictionary, Oxford, O.U.P., 1980.
- Widdowson, H.G., Teaching language as communication, London, O.U.P., 1978.
- Zgusta, L., Manual of Lexicography, The Hague, Mouton, 1971.

Appendix ATeacher and student questionnaires

Copies of the questionnaires completed by French teachers and students are included in this Appendix.

Although questionnaires may not be the best way of obtaining information, they are the most efficient way of gaining a broad picture of the views of large numbers of people. In the case of the students, more specific information on dictionary use was also sought (and discussed in Chapter 4).

Institution: _____

Level of class: _____

Teacher: _____

1(a) Do you recommend that your French students, at this level, purchase a dictionary? If you do, which one(s)?

(b) Could you explain what factors influenced your choice of dictionary for these particular students (factors may include: cost, availability, bilingual preference, monolingual preference, most up-to-date, etc.)

(c) Are there other dictionaries that you recommend your students use, though not purchase, which are available in the Library or Department? If so, which one(s)?

2 Many language teachers, particularly at university level, recommend monolingual dictionaries for their students or at least express the hope that their students will use them. Do you have any theories, ideas, opinions to support or refute such recommendations/hopes?

3 In connection with this question of monolingual or bilingual dictionaries do you give your students any advice on the relative merits of these two types of dictionaries?

- 4 If you do recommend a monolingual dictionary, are you aware of any difficulties your students have in using it, and to what do you attribute these difficulties?
-
-
-
- 5 In students' written work (at least) you have no doubt observed errors which may be linked to dictionary use or misuse. Can you give any examples of these errors? What type of error are they usually? To what do you attribute these errors?
-
-
-
- 6 Do you give your students any instruction in the use of dictionaries? (formally in class, informally on request or as the need arises, etc.)
-
-
-
- 7 Students, or any users for that matter, consult dictionaries in relation to (a) the comprehension of French and (b) the production of French. To which of these two needs do you think dictionaries respond better? Can you draw a distinction between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries in respect of these two needs?
-
-
-
-
- 8 As far as the production of French is concerned what do you see as the relative roles of your students' dictionary(ies) and their grammar or textbook if the latter are recommended?
-
-
-
- 9 If you make a particular point of teaching vocabulary, how do you integrate the dictionary into this teaching?
-
-

- 10 Finally, which dictionary(ies) do you yourself consult for your own use?

- 11 Comments: _____

FRENCH DICTIONARY USE: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Institution: _____

Level of class: _____

We are interested in seeking information on the use of dictionaries by students studying French. In responding to the questions please try to distinguish clearly between the different dictionaries you use and, in particular, between bilingual (French/English and English/French) and monolingual (French/French) dictionaries.

DICTIONARY USE: GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1 In the table below would you please list the following information in the appropriate columns:
 - A. all the bilingual and monolingual dictionaries you use in your French studies (identify their names clearly)
 - B. whether you personally own the dictionary or borrow it from a friend, library, etc.
 - C. if you own the dictionary, the reasons why you purchased it in preference to another dictionary (reasons may include: recommended by teacher, cost, portability, availability, preference for bilingual or monolingual, etc.)
 - D. when you purchased the dictionary (5th, 6th, 7th form, 1st year university, etc.)
 - E. how frequently you use it (daily, weekly, monthly,....)

A. Name of dictionary	B. Own or borrow	C. Reasons for purchase	D. When purchased	E. Frequency of use

- 2 You probably have a favorite dictionary. Which is it?

DICTIONARY USE: SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- 3 There are many types of information in dictionaries and you may consult them for a variety of reasons. Please indicate which dictionary(ies) you usually consult, if any, for the following types of information. In the right hand column please show how often you consult any dictionary for a given type of information, i.e. frequently=1, sometimes=2, hardly ever=3, never=4.

You may abbreviate clearly the titles of the dictionaries.

Type of information sought	1st choice of dictionary	2nd choice of dictionary	Frequency of consultation
1. Meaning of a French word			
2. The English or French equivalent of a French or English word or expression			
3. The grammatical environment of a French word (e.g. à or de after verb, etc.)			
4. Examples of the usage of a French word			
5. Synonyms or antonyms of a French word			
6. The gender of a French word			
7. The pronunciation of a French word			
8. The spelling of a French word (including feminine or plural forms)			
9. Idiomatic expressions involving a French word			
10. Verb conjugation tables			
11. The register of a word (slang, literary, obsolete, etc.)			
12. Words of the same family as a known French word (its derivatives)			

- 4 In the table above you have indicated what you use dictionaries for. Now could you think a little about the processes involved in using a dictionary to comprehend written or spoken French or to produce written or spoken French.

(a) Comprehension of French

When you are reading (or listening to) a French text and you come across a word that you don't understand, you may

ignore it, try to guess its meaning from the context, or consult a dictionary.

When you do consult a dictionary for this purpose, is it usually a bilingual or a monolingual one?

Is consultation for this purpose usually satisfactory?
i.e. do you usually find the word or expression you are looking for and understand its meaning?

If you use a monolingual dictionary for this purpose, do you ever have trouble understanding the definitions?

(b) Production of French

When you prepare some written (or spoken French), do you usually use a bilingual or a monolingual dictionary?

If you use a bilingual dictionary do you ever check the usage of the word in a monolingual dictionary?

(c) General

For which use (comprehending French or producing written/spoken French) do you consider your dictionary(ies) are more useful? and why?

For which use (comprehending French or producing written/spoken French) do you mainly use your dictionary(ies)?

Comprehending French

☐

Producing French

☐

Both about the same

☐

DICTIONARY REFERENCE SKILLS

5 Have you ever received any instruction from your teacher/lecturer/tutor on the use of dictionaries? If so, by whom and when? _____

6 Have you read the introductions to the dictionary(ies) you use? _____

7 Are you familiar with the system of abbreviations used in your dictionary(ies)? _____

Appendix B

Prices of some dictionaries recommended for student purchase

<u>Dictionary</u>	<u>Price (as at October, 1985)</u>	
Collins Gem	\$ 5.95	
Cassells Paperback	\$ 9.95	
Collins Pocket	\$14.95	
<hr/>		
Robert SNL Micro-Poche	\$22.00	
Harrap's Concise	\$24.50	
Collins Robert Concise	\$24.95	
Dictionnaire du français contemporain (DFC)	\$25.95	
Micro-Robert (hb)	\$26.95	
<hr/>		
Concise Oxford French Dict.	\$34.40	(also cheaper limp cover version available)
Collins Robert French Dict.	\$37.95	
Harrap's Shorter French Dict.	\$43.95	
Dictionnaire Bordas	\$44.00	
<hr/>		
Petit Robert	\$79.95	
Lexis (Larousse)	\$79.95	
<hr/>		
Harrap's Standard (4 vols.)	\$92.95	per volume.

Dictionaries used by French teachers

	Monolingual	Bilingual
7th Form teachers	Petit Larousse (6), Petit Robert (3), DFC (3), Larousse (3 vol.) (1), Micro-Robert (1)	Harrap's Standard (4), Harrap's Shorter (4), Harrap's New Standard (1), Concise Oxford Fr Dict. (1)
Stage I teachers	Petit Robert (6), Petit Larousse (2), DFC (2), Le Robert (2), TLF (2), Lexis (1), Littré (1), Diction- naire Bordas (1)	Collins Robert (4), Harrap's Standard (1), Harrap's New Standard (1), Harrap's New Shorter (1)
Stage II teachers	Le Petit Robert (5), Dictionnaire Bordas (3), Le Robert (2), Lexis (1), DFC (1), Bénac-Dictionnaire des synonymes (1), Cellard & Rey-Dict. du français non- conventionnel (1)	Harrap's New Standard (6), Collins Robert (1)

Appendix D

Dictionaries used : Seventh formers (N = 35)

	Monolingual	Bilingual
'large'	-	Harrap's Shorter 1948 Edn. (3), Harrap's New Shorter (4), Harrap's Standard (6)
'medium'	Petit Larousse (8)	Concise Oxford Fr. Dict. (8), Cassells School Dict. (1), Collins Robert Concise (1), General Fr/Eng Dict. (1), Harrap's Concise (14)
'small'	-	Collins Gem (8), New Fr/Eng. Pkt. Dict. (2), Oxford Fr. Pkt. Dict. (1), Harrap's New Pkt. Fr/Eng Dict. (2), Cassells Pkt. Fr/Eng (2), Hugo Pkt. Dict. (1)
'specialised'	Dictionnaire des synonymes-Larousse (1)	-

Note: The 8 students who claimed to use the Petit Larousse spelt it as follows: La petite Larousse (1), Petit Rousse (1), La Rousse (2), Le Petit Larousse (2), and correctly Le Petit Larousse (2). Two teachers also spelt it as La Rousse.

Dictionaries used : Stage I (Canterbury) (N = 24)

	Monolingual	Bilingual
'large'	Petit Robert (2)	Harrap's Standard (9), Harrap's New Standard (1), Harrap's Shorter (5), Collins Robert (6)
'medium'	Micro-Robert (20), Robert Méthodique (1), Petit Larousse (2)	Hamlyn Fr. Dict. (1), Putnam's Fr/Eng Dict. (1), Harrap's Concise (1), Cambridge Fr/Eng. Dict. (1), Everyman's Fr/Eng Dict. (1)
'small'	Larousse de poche (1)	Collins Gem (9), Harrap's New Pkt. (2), Cassell's Pkt. Dict. (3)
'specialised'	Dictionnaire d'argot (1)	Harrap's Slang Dict. (1)

Dictionaries used : Stage I (Otago) (N = 20)

	Monolingual	Bilingual
'large'	(Grand) Robert (1)	Collins Robert (10), Harrap's Shorter (3), Collins Fr. Dict. (1)
'medium'	Larousse -various (5), DFC (1)	Concise Oxford Fr. Dict. (3), Collins Robert Concise (1), Harrap's Concise (3), Langens- scheidt Shorter (1)
'small'	-	Collins Gem (7), Larousse Fr/Eng. (1), Cassell's Compact (1), Langenscheidt Pkt. (1)
'specialised'	-	-

Dictionaries used : Stage II (Canterbury & Otago) (N = 14)

	Monolingual	Bilingual
'large'	Petit Robert (2)	Harrap's Standard (1), Harrap's New Standard (3), Harrap's Shorter (2), Collins Robert (1)
'medium'	Micro-Robert (9) Petit Larousse (3), Robert Méthodique (1)	Prisma Dutch/Fr. Dict. (1), Collins Robert Concise (2), College Dict. (1), Harrap's Concise (1), Bantam New Coll. Dict. (1), Langen- scheidt Shorter (1)
'small'	-	Collins Gem (4), Harrap's New Pkt. (2), Cassells Compact (3), Hugo Fr. Dict. (1)
'specialised'	Dictionnaire des synonymes (Bénac) (1)	-

Dictionaries used : Stage III & M.A. (Canterbury) (N = 10)

	Monolingual	Bilingual
'large'	(Grand)Robert (2), Petit Robert (2), Larousse Lexis (2)	Harrap's Standard (4), Harrap's Shorter (3), Harrap's New Shorter (3), Collins Robert (6)
'medium'	Micro-Robert (6), Robert Méthodique (2), Petit Larousse (2)	Harrap's Concise (1), Prisma Fr/Dutch (1), Hamlyn Fr/Eng (2), Con- cise Oxford Fr. Dict. (1)
'small'	-	Collins Gem (1), Cassells Compact (2), Larousse Fr/Eng (1)
'specialised'	Dictionnaire des synonymes (Bénac) (1)	Harrap's Slang and Colloquialisms Dict. (1)

TABLE D1: DICTIONARIES OWNED: REASONS FOR PURCHASE

Reason	Percent of dictionaries bought for a given reason				
	7th Form	Stage I (C)	Stage I (O)	Stage II	Stage III & M.A.
Teacher recommended it	-	48	42	39	62*
Portable	38	16	23	36	23
Cost	10	14	13	25	8
Available	5	2	10	-	15
Convenient	-	7	6	-	4
(A gift or prize)	(29)	(14)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Bilingual preference	14	16	3	14	23
Monolingual preference	-	5	3	4	4

Note: (1) The percentages add to more than 100%, since respondents could give more than one reason for the purchase of a dictionary.

(2) The dictionaries owned by seventh formers and classified under 'a gift of prize' were in four out of six cases dictionaries 'inherited' from mothers (3) or a grandfather (1) and were rather old.

(3) *For the 16 dictionaries bought by Stage III and M.A. students on their teachers' recommendations, 6 had been bought while the students were at school, 10 at university.

TABLE D2: DICTIONARIES OWNED: WHEN PURCHASED

Dictionary bought in:	Percent of dictionaries bought				
	7th Form	Stage I (C)	Stage I (O)	Stage II	Stage III & M.A.
3rd - 5th form	86	23	7	28	22
6th, 7th form	14	13	21	8	13
Stage I	-	65	72	52	35
Stage II	-	-	-	12	4
Stage III	-	-	-	-	26

TABLE D3: DICTIONARY CONSULTATION FREQUENCY

	Dictionaries owned					Dictionaries borrowed				
	Daily N (%)	3-4/week N (%)	Weekly N (%)	Monthly N (%)	Rarely N (%)	Daily N (%)	3-4/week N (%)	Weekly N (%)	Monthly N (%)	Rarely N (%)
<u>7th Formers</u>										
monolingual	-	-	-	-	-	1 (11)	-	4 (45)	2 (22)	2 (22)
bilingual	10 (48)	4 (19)	5 (24)	2 (9)	-	6 (18)	4 (12)	21 (64)	-	2 (6)
<u>Stage I (C)</u>										
monolingual	3 (14)	4 (18)	11 (50)	3 (14)	1 (5)	-	-	2 (40)	3 (60)	-
bilingual	5 (23)	3 (14)	10 (45)	2 (9)	2 (9)	1 (5)	-	6 (29)	12 (57)	2 (9)
<u>Stage I (O)</u>										
monolingual	1 (25)	1 (25)	1 (25)	1 (25)	-	-	-	1 (33)	2 (67)	-
bilingual	10 (37)	5 (19)	10 (37)	1 (4)	1 (4)	-	-	3 (60)	1 (20)	1 (20)
<u>Stage II</u>										
monolingual	-	2 (20)	7 (70)	1 (10)	-	-	1 (17)	1 (17)	2 (33)	2 (33)
bilingual	5 (28)	2 (11)	10 (56)	-	1 (5)	-	1 (14)	5 (71)	1 (14)	-
<u>Stage III/M.A.</u>										
monolingual	2 (20)	-	5 (50)	3 (30)	-	1 (14)	-	1 (14)	5 (71)	-
bilingual	4 (25)	2 (13)	6 (38)	1 (6)	3 (19)	3 (30)	1 (10)	2 (20)	4 (40)	-

TABLE D4 : THE STUDENTS' 'FAVOURITE' DICTIONARIES

	Type of dictionary	No. of dictionaries		No response
		Monolingual	Bilingual	
7th Formers	'large'	-	4	14
	'medium'	1	5	
	'small'	-	9	
	total	1	18	
Stage I (Canty)	'large'	-	8	3
	'medium'	5	2	
	'small'	-	6	
	total	5	16	
Stage I (Otago)	'large'	-	9	3
	'medium'	1	2	
	'small'	-	5	
	total	1	16	
Stage II	'large'	-	2	-
	'medium'	3	3	
	'small'	-	6	
	total	3	11	
Stage III & M.A.	'large'	-	5	2
	'medium'	2	1	
	'small'	-	-	
	total	2	6	

Appendix E

Recorded Protocols

These are the full transcripts of the 'translations' and dictionary consultation descriptions provided by students and discussed in Chapter 4.

S1, S2, S3, S4 are the four students, I the interviewer. Dashes refer to short pauses in the students' speech, dots to longer pauses.

Recorded protocol: translation French to English
 (S1, S2, Students; I, Interviewer)

- S1 All the treasures of MGM and of Paramount, and of so many others, films, animated cartoons, educative programs, all this spread out? I don't know what bazardé means. I'll look it up in Micro-Robert - the verb - infinitive bazarder and it says Se défaire rapidement de quelque chose, so I'll have to look up what défaire means - I think it means defeat or something... it means réduire à l'état - to reduce into the state of elements - I'll have to look back at bazarder and it doesn't fit.
 That's not much good (the Micro-Robert) because I can't understand the definition, so I'll look it up in the bilingual dictionary (Collins Robert), so, bazarder - if I was doing it in an assignment and I didn't understand bazardé and I didn't understand the definition I'd forget about it and go on for a bit - so, bazarder, to get rid of, ditch, yep that sounds alright, to get rid of, throw away, and vrac, I don't know what that means...
 and it (the Collins Robert) says, pell-mell - sounds right haphazardly at \$25 each and that's only the start, the prices can only - either means go up or down - I'll look it (dégringoler) up and it (Micro-Robert) says descend précipitamment - go down.
- S2 30 cm disks which seem to have nothing under their - pochette - I'm not sure about it but probably means pockets - I'll look it up in Micro-Robert - pochette - it's got a petit enveloppe - of material or paper - so it must mean the thing records go in and I don't know what it is [...]
 under their conventional covers and which are in reality video-disks - images, movements, colours and stereo sound - emboutis - I don't know what that means, so I'll look up emboutir, it probably means - in Collins Gem. Emboutir is to stamp, to crash into or to ram, so ... to stamp, it probably means printed - printed in a chain like common - microsillon probably won't be in Collins Gem. I'll look it up in Micro-Robert.
- I Why, does it look too modern? (microsillon)
- S2 Yes, or too long! - disque de longue durée, 33 rpm ... it means a 33, record, a 33 rpm, so like common 33's on a matrice-moule - it wouldn't be in Collins Gem either - so I'll look up matrice (in Micro-Robert) it's got under matrice a moule qui après avoir reçu une empreinte - and there's no matrice-moule so I'll probably look up moule - see what that is ... it's (Micro-Robert) got corps solide creusé et façonné - I don't know what façonné means either but no matter, into which you pour something - oh it must be a mould and so for matrice it was a mould which after having received an imprint - so a matrice-moule must be kind of something that you mass-produce something out of a mould.
- I A master-mould.

S2 Yep, a master-mould à gaufres. I don't know that.

I It's a waffle-iron. I'll tell you to save you.

S1 For - in order to enjoy it on his television all that needs to be done is to buy the thing, the video-recorder - the appropriate video-recorder - the RCA model, or even better the system with laser ray by Pioneer or Toshiba.

S2 A lot less expensive than a video - much superior in visual quality and sound - inusable, I think that means you can't wear it out, durable, eternal, the sillon - I saw that before when I was looking up microsillon - I'll look up sillon in Micro-Robert I think it means lines - it's got ligne, ride - oh, no, down below just below that it's got trace produite à la surface du disque - my English isn't good enough, the lines, I'll call it lines, on the video-disk - where's that que coming from ... that no saphir - I've got no idea what it means - ... oh probably sapphire ... will labour, will never labour - that no sapphire will ever labour, um, will ever ... I'd better look up labourer - probably in Collins Gem - to plough, to make deep gashes, to make furrows in, so it must mean that kind of printing of the records I suppose, that no sapphire could impress, I suppose that must be how they make them, really I don't know.

I You don't know about sapphire needles?

S2 Oh yes (doubtfully).

I It means whatever the needle does when it runs through the grooves.

S2 Oh yes, will ever do that since the reading is assured by a luminous whatever pinceau is - I'll look up pinceau in Collins Gem as well the brush um, since reading is assured by a luminous, immaterial brush? (laughs) - sounds pretty weak but I'll leave it at that. Where's that sont coming from? Anyway, are in the cinema what bronze, are to cinema what bronze is to sculpture, a guarantee of eternity.

S1 There, therefore the hundreds of thousands of american homes entertain ... entreprennent - ah undertake to - constituer - I'll just look up entreprendre, ah, entreprendre, in Collins Robert ... um, it's got ... to begin, to embark upon, to undertake, to launch upon therefore hundreds of thousands of american homes undertake to constitute surprising cinema - that's not going to work - I'll look up constituer in Collins Robert - and it's got ... constituer ... set up, to put together, um, to constitute, compose ... to ... that constitutes all - no it won't be that ... to appoint ... it looks like it must mean something, um, to make or to constitute

I Set up?

S1 Oh yeh, - yeh, yeh, it's different from English isn't

it, slightly? - surprising or - unusual, I'll look up cinémathèque, does that just mean cinemas? - cinémathèque in Collins Robert too. I think I should use this more - it's got film archives, or library, or film theatre, sounds like film theatre and um, where the master workers, master-piece makers, up till here so volatile ... the master-piece makers of sound, masters of sound, of image..

I Do you want to look that word up?

S1 Chef-d'oeuvre? I thought I knew it. I don't know what it means.

I You almost know what it means actually.

S1 Oh, masterpieces (in Collins Robert). Oh, where the masterpieces of sound, of picture and of colour will conserve their freshness intact for centuries and centuries.

S2 And I who haven't even bought a video yet. I find myself two revolutions behind, or three or four. Hammacher Schlemmer, invraisemblable, I used to know what that means, I'll look it up - it's probably in Collins Gem - it's a pretty common word I think ... unlikely, improbable, or incredible - so, unlikely magasin - I think that just means shop, so unlikely shop on 57th Street,, doesn't he propose in his television catalogue ... does that mean, I'm not sure that a dictionary would help there, does that mean in his catalogue of 3-screen TVs or in his catalogue, 3-screen TVs? to follow 3 programmes at once - and a parabolic antenna or aerial at 8000, 8500 dollars to directly receive the emissions by satellite from satellite.

S1 I go into Bloomingdale's, the Galleries Lafayette on 3rd Avenue and I decide immediately to consider - myself for what I am - to look at myself for what I am, a pre-historic man.

S2 Au rayon - on the television - does that mean ray or stripe or something, I'll look it up - it's in this one (Collins Gem) because I've looked it up before ... rayon, what's it got?, au rayon Télévision, it can mean radius ... or ray ...

I Do you want to try another dictionary?

S2 Yes, I'd better - in Micro-Robert - they've got 3 entries for rayon I can't see ...

I You're in a shop.

S2 So it's a Department. That was in Collins Gem; it said a department, but ... so in the television department they're currently selling apparatus - machines, I suppose that would be the best way to put that, which have nothing to see? (rien à voir) - that's an idiom I've seen before - I'd better look it up - under voir - I think - in Micro-Robert - the problem

is voir's (the entry) so big - yes well ... [long silence]
... rien might be smaller ...

I Did you just start at the top of the entry? or were you looking for the bold type?

S2 No - I went to representer (in middle of article) - I don't know, I just had a feeling it might be there, but I don't know whether it is or not. I'll try under rien since there's so much to read through; rien might be smaller ... not much though (laughs).
um ... [long silence] ... it's got rien de but not - this is rien à isn't it? ... I don't know what I'd do there now, but, it would mean looking right through [agrees that if he had more time]
right, so machines which have nothing to do with our strange - I'll look up lucarne in Micro-Robert - am I looking it up in the wrong volume? - it's at the end of this one ... lucarne is a little window um, something in the roof of a building - or a little opening in a wall - and something else I don't know - so it must mean a little opening -

I What do you think it is?

S2 Does it mean the TVs?

S1 These machines - munis - I have a vague idea what it means - made up or - I don't know - I'd better look it up - I'm looking up munir in this (Micro-Robert) because I use it more often, and in Micro-Robert it's got garnir, pourvoir de ce qui est nécessaire, so, to provide for what is necessary for it, for the end, and it's also got pronom. I don't know, it probably means to provide what is necessary, provide the wherewithal, provide the right set-up for three objectives, three goals, for each of the fundamental colours - projetter - plan, as big as you want, with for their only limit the - available, I'd better look up recul - it's got (in Micro-Robert) under recul - it's got - movement backwards after the shot, so, I've forgotten what the word is in English.

S2 Recoil.

S1 Recoil of a gun, and ... position far away in space or time providing a better view or perspective ... the available viewing point - or something like that - in your living-room, a giant image on the wall.

S2 As in the cinema, or is it as for?, as in the cinema the Americans, who generally enjoy, or like, I suppose, ample living-rooms have resolved to no longer abuse their eyes on - I'll look up mesquin (in Micro-Robert) qui est attachée à ce qui est petit, médiocre ... so it must mean mediocre or small kind of ... on mediocre, everyday rectangles.

Recorded protocol: translation French to English
 (S3, S4, Students; I, Interviewer)

- S3 All the treasures of MGM and Paramount and so many others, films, animated cartoons, educational programs, all that - I'm not sure what étalé means - étaler - the verb - (in Collins Robert) - to spread, strew ... something about spreading out - all that spread out - bazardé - I'll look up bazarder - (in Collins Robert) - to get rid of, chuck out, ditch - alright ditched - vrac - in bulk, or in a jumble, higgledy-piggledy (in Collins Robert) at \$25 each, and this is only the beginning, the prices can only ... get worse.
- S4 The 30 cm records or disks which look like nothing under their conventional packets or covers, and which are in reality video-records - tapes - images, movements, colours and its stereo - emboutis - I'll look up the verb emboutir (in Harrap) - to stamp, press metal, to emboss - stamped all the same or in the chain like the - microsillon? -
- I Is it there?
- S3 It may not be - I think this dictionary is quite old actually (1940) - I'll try this other one (Collins Robert) - microgroove, long-playing records - like ordinary records by some machine [.....].
- S4 In order to enjoy it on its screen, it is necessary to buy the - video-turn-disk - record player corresponding the model RCA or better the system - I'll look up rayon - (in Collins Robert) - beam, ray - laser beam of Pioneer and Toshiba. Much less expensive than a magneto-scope.
- I You'd better look that up.
- S3 Video-tape recorder (in Collins Robert), much superior in visual quality, and sound, it doesn't get used up, it lasts for ever; the - sillons - (in Collins Robert) furrow? groove - the grooves of the video-disk that no other - will ever work - saphir (in Collins Robert) - sapphire - needle - since the reading is assured by a - luminous, unmaterial - I'll have to look up pinceau (in Collins Robert) - brush, I suppose? - are at the cinema that - are to the cinema what the bronze is to sculpture - a guarantee of eternity.
- S4 There is so that millions, some millions of american foyers - foyer (goes back to French to check context) home? (in Harrap) of american homes - entreprennent
- I What are you looking up?
- S4 Entreprenner, entreprendre.
- I No, entreprendre.
- S4 I think it means (in Harrap) to undertake - undertake to

constitute astonishing - or maybe - cinema? televised

I Do you know what the word for library is?

S4 Bibliothèque - So that would be like a library of video-records, or the chef-d'oeuvre - I should know that - or the masterpieces (in Harraps) until here so many volatils (volatile) with the sound, the picture and the colour conserving their freshness intact for the centuries and centuries.

S3 And me who hasn't even yet bought a video-cassette recorder. I find myself with - I refind myself, I find myself 2, 2 revolutions behind, or 3 or 4. Hammacher Schlemmer, incredible shop of the 57th Street, doesn't it propose on its catalogue TVs with 3 screens - to follow 3 programmes at once - and a parabolic antenna - ah that'll be like a parabola - at 8500 dollars to capture directly the satellite emissions?

S4 I go to Bloomingdale's, les Galeries Lafayette of the 3rd Avenue and I decide soon (immediately) to consider - what I am - a prehistoric man.
Television beam

I No rayon doesn't mean that here, you'll have to look it up and find another meaning; he's in a shop, and he's in the Television something...

S4 ... (in Harrap) row? (physically checks context) um radius
(she thinks it may not be in her dictionary, but it is as department of a shop, but she does not manage to connect this meaning to the context).
In the Television department, one sells currently the apparatus which has nothing to see with our strange - our foreign - lucarne? (in Harrap) dormer window?

I What are the possibilities there?

S4 It says dormer window, attic window, skylight.
[finally, after discussion, agree on TV sets]

S3 These ... engines? - machines? - I'll look it (engin) up (in Collins Robert) - machine, instrument, tool, contraptions - these gadgets built with 3 objectives to - for each of the basic colours, project, as big as you like, the only limit the - that's flexible (disponible) isn't it [no, available] - the available room in your living-room, a giant image on the wall. As in the cinema.

S4 The Americans who play?

I No. You'd better look at that verb if you're going to look it up.

S4 It's jouir - (in Harrap) - who enjoy - generally enjoy from living-room armchairs.

I No - what does that word (ample) look like?

S4 Ample - who enjoy large living-rooms are resolved to no more abîmer (in Harrap) spoil their eyes on the something rectangles - mesquin - (in Harrap) on the petty - their shabby televisions.

I What are the actual possibilities in the dictionary?

S4 Mean, shabby, paltry, petty

Recorded protocol: translation English to French
 (S1, S2, Students; I, Interviewer)

- S2 Le samedi soir - I mean morning - le samedi matin dans le - it can be either trimestre or semestre d'hiver - je vais à bicyclette en ville pour jouer au rugby.
- I It says bike there, not bicycle - are you aware of the difference between them - bicyclette is the word for bicycle - do you know the word for bike?
- S2 Vélo.
- S1 L'hiver, c'est une grande époque or something like that, it doesn't sound very good.
- S2 Nous habitons à trois milles de la ville et la voie est dans la plupart uphill - I've no idea what that is. Uphill - is it one word here? (in Collins Gem) - it's got qui monte or difficile or pénible talking about a task, that's figurative, I suppose - to go uphill is monter - is that the context here - the way is mostly uphill - so et la voie monte or could you put est montante or something like that?
- S1 It would be best to re-arrange it all.
- S2 J'ai besoin de get a good early start - to commencer très bientôt or something like that pour être en ville by nine, par neuf heures, ... I've never heard of by nine or avant neuf heures, or something
- S1 En route, je n'ai pas l'occasion de or je ne peux pas might be better ... regarder autour de moi ou remarquer très bien très ... remarquer beaucoup parce que c'est assez difficile a ride ... voyage, journey, seems a bit much for just going into town.
- S2 De temps en temps où il devient un peu - steep - I could look it up - steep has to be in Collins Gem - raide, escarpé, oh it's talking about prices the rest of it. Um, escarpé - I don't know, sounds like a mountain or something, I'll put raide um où il devient un peu raide et je dois me stand up - we do know this, tenez, tenir ... alright I'm giving up on standing up and I'm looking it up in Collins Gem - um - stand up's way down the bottom of Collins Gem when I looked there first - se lever, se mettre debout, so that's what it is so -
- I Does that mean to stand up when you're sitting down or does it also mean to be standing up - what's to be standing up?
- S2 Etre debout ... je dois me mettre debout sur les pédales et tread - tread I'm looking up as well in Collins Gem - tread - is that how you spell it? - um - well they've just got marcher and marcher sur - for to tread on, but I don't think that's what what they mean - so I'll try Collins Robert (long silence) - it's not really got it here, I'll probably have to look up pedal, I reckon,

and that'll probably be pédaler - I'll look it up still - it'll probably be pédaler or something and you wouldn't say that straight after using pédale to pedal - it is pédaler or you could put et travailler vraiment dur.

- S1 Mais, c'est merveilleux, il est merveilleux d'aller au rugby, d'aller? le samedi matin, matinée, matin, avec ma, mon - I'll have to look up towel - in the Collins Robert - and it says - oh - it doesn't sound right - serviette - bath - I suppose serviette would be the best one they've got - I'd better take that since I haven't got any others - avec ma serviette et ma - oh, we did this um ..., something like rechange - I'll look up change - as in change of clothing - it's (Collins Robert) got ... to change one's clothes is changer de vêtements - it would be the noun I want ... it isn't - oh - yeh - vêtements de rechange à la carrier - I'll have to look up carrier - porte-bagages, pushing hard, travaillant dur pour y attendre, atteindre, pour y arriver - by nine again - à neuf heures or avant or something like that.

[...]

- S2 Un jour je l'ai entendue dire à maman "Il est plein de haricots ce garçon-là, ton garçon."
(the student is reluctantly persuaded that it does not mean literally 'full of beans' and looks it up under beans and decides on plein de joie).

Recorded protocol: translation English to French
(S3, S4, Students; I, Interviewer)

- S3 Le samedi matin dans le terme d'hiver - term (Collins Robert) trimestre d'hiver, je vais à bicyclette.
- I Now, it says bike not bicycle.
- S3 Is there a more slang sort of word? Bike - they won't have bike in here (Collins Robert) will they? Oh - vélo - aller ou venir à vélo - je vais à vélo dans la ville pour jouer au rugby.
- S4 L'hiver est un beau temps.
- S3 Nous habitons à trois milles au dehors de la ville et le chemin - the way in - est pour la plupart uphill - I don't know that - up - uphill - en haut? - au dessus? no en travaux - it says the road is and then it's got a wee dash - I suppose that means uphill cos it said uphill at the beginning, ainsi j'ai besoin de get avoir un bon commencement pour être en ville à neuf heures
- S4 A la chemin je n'ai pas une chance pour - regarder autour de moi - ou pour remarquer - très beaucoup les objets parce que - the going - (in Harrap) qui marche
- I No, that's the wrong part of speech.
- S3 Couldn't you make a noun out of that?
- S4 Because le voyage est assez dur.
- S3 De temps où il gets - devient un peu steep - raide (Collins Robert) - je dois - stand up on the pedals - me tenir - me lever - me tenir - sur les pedals (Collins Robert) ... oh, pédale, no that's piano, oh no that's all types - sur les pédales et tread - pédaler? (laughs) - I'll see what the verb is for pedal - how about faire du colportage - no that must be to peddle goods or something - doesn't have it -
- I Doesn't it?
- S3 No, it's got no it doesn't have it - it's only got - faire du colportage
- I Which means to peddle goods - that's the other ... - you are spelling it right?
- S3 Is the p-e-d-d-l-e - oh -
- I Pedal, the verb, is spelt the same way as the noun.
- S3 Pedal - so it is - it is pédaler or traverser la ville à bicyclette. I'll put appuyer dur sur les pédales.
- S4 Mais, c'est beau - aller au rugby le samedi matin avec mon - serviette et d'autres vêtements sur - I'm looking up carrier (in Harrap) - porte-bagages - sur le porte-

bagages et pousser dur - et pousse dur - pour arriver à
neuf heures

[...]

Un jour j'ai entendu - no - je l'ai entendue dire à maman
- full of beans - I'll look it up - do you think it's in
the dictionary? - I'll look under beans "Il est gaillard,
ce garçon de tienne. Gaillard."